

# THE HISTORY OF MANIPUR

; AN EARLY PERIOD ;

W. L. SINGH





# THE HISTORY OF MANIPUR

( An early period )

BY

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## THE GEOLOGICAL HISTORY

The definition of boundary of the kingdom of Manipur involves two sets of investigations. They are the ancient kingdom of Manipur and present Manipur. To define the boundary of an ancient kingdom is a difficult task. Population was very sparse, it was chiefly concentrated in small better habitable areas as chief political units, and the surrounding land masses, practically no man's land, which were under the sway of that political unit was the territory of that political unit. The first political nucleus of the ancient kingdom of Manipur which was awaiting a name to be given by that time was a small area on the southeast corner of present political Manipur comprising the small valley now known as the Kabow valley proper and its surrounding hills at about 200 B C. This political unit was given the name Moriya. The sway of this political unit was mainly on the north, east and south. But in course of time its sway was also directed towards the west. A second political nucleus began to grow on a small area in the Upper Iril valley of the Imphal plateau at about 800 A. D. An approximate boundary map of the ancient kingdom of Manipur which may, at the fortune of the princes, be taken to have maintained upto 1750 A. D. is shown in the section on the Racial and Political history. Since then it was subjected from time to time either partly or wholly by the rising power of Burma upto 1825 A.D. In the same year it was again followed by reprisals and repulsion of the Burmese forces, and the ancient kingdom of Manipur was regained. Finally due to pressure of Burma and the British the territory was shrunken to its present size. More details may be seen in the section on the Racial and Political history.

Now we are chiefly concerned with present Manipur particularly the Imphal valley. Hence we proceed to investigate the geological formation mainly of the present Manipur. Geographically Manipur

is situated approximately in the area covered by 92°E to 95°E longitude and 23°N to 25°N latitude. It is a hilly and mountainous region. The central part of it is a flat and fertile plain known as Manipur plateau or commonly as Imphal valley. The Manipur plateau lies at an altitude of about 850 m above the sea level. It has a moderate and comfortable climate. It gets monsoon climate with an annual rainfall of about 150 cm of rain. The drainage system may be divided into two parts: the western portion of it goes to the Surma valley, while the eastern portion including Imphal valley goes to Burma.

Geologists believe that the Himalayas and its branches are young fold mountains. This mountain chain was formed some millions of years back by severe earth movements. The mountain chain where Manipur is situated belongs to the great Himalayas. Before the present position, the areas of this mountain chain were beds of shallow seas. The formation of this great mountain chain is said to have been during the Tertiary age. In this era there were great orogenic movements which are said to be responsible for the building up of the Alpine Himalayas and other equatorial mountain systems. It is further said that there were five remarkable phases of uplifts. Of the five uplifts the most remarkable one occurred during the Middle-Miocene period estimated to about 18 million years from now. As a result of the series of movements the great Himalayan mountains attained their present configuration. Along with the rise of this great mountain chain the geosynclinal basin became progressively shallower accompanied with gradual change in the marine environment.

In 1952-53 A. D. one fossil of a sea living creature, cuttle fish, now extinct, was found at Kangpokpi in the northern part of Manipur. Kangpokpi is a hill station and its altitude is higher than that of the Imphal valley. This shows that Manipur was at one time a sea bed. In subsequent earth movements like folding, faulting etc the shape of the land masses had further changes. A basin like portion full of water, is believed to have been left out.

This basin became a lake basin in course of time. Vegetations were grown on these land masses. Gradually the bottom of the said lake was filled up with sediments of lake and other deposits. In some other earth movements rock clips were thrown into the lake partially burried in the sediments of the lake deposits. The excess water was drained along some lines of synclines. Thus a land mass partially filled with water was formed. In this way Imphal valley is believed to have been formed to a lacustrine plain.

Vegetations were grown and regrown After thousands of cycles the plateau became a swampy mass of land with much of its water drained up Such conditions are also proved by the recent findings in the tunnelling work of the Loktak Hydro-Electric project The deep interior of a ridge of a mountain is supposed to be composed of hard rocks But contrary to this view only clays are found which made the tunnelling work extremely treacherous.

It is generally said that earthquake tremors are felt with less intensity on the Thanga hills surrounded by the waters of the Loktak lake than the surrounding plains. This is of course not confirmed by any seismogram It is therefore worth to examine whether the Thanga hill has a continuous link with the parent rock beneath it or not If it is not, it is a hill floating on the clay deposits of the lake

The examination on the different horizones in the soil profile of the diggings of the peripherial region strongly indicates that some 5000 years before Christ the entire valley was submerged in water which was about 30 m higher than the present water level.

The riverine theory may also be attributed to the origin of Imphal valley Stratigraphically the rocks of Manipur belonged to what is known as the Dishang series of the Tertiary rock. This group of rocks is the oldest of the Tertiary rocks and ranges in age from Upper Crataceous to Upper Eocene which is about 60 million years old. So the land masses of Manipur is now 60 million years old since its birth from the bottom of the ocean.

## THE HISTORY OF MANIPUR AS FOUND TO-DAY

We find to day, the history of Manipur begins from 33 A D It is said that Nongta Lauren Pakhangba came down from heaven and ascended the throne in the year 1335 Kalyuga Era corresponding to 33 A D He married Laisna, according to some accounts Laisa-ra, a girl who, according to Cheitharol Kumbaba, came along with Porreiton while the latter migrated and settled on this land Nongta Lauren Pakhangba reigned for 120 years by becoming god in daytime and transforming to flesh and blood in the night time The text further states that on seeing the transforming his wife Laisna suspected him of co habiting with his paramour So she asked one day she would like to become goddess But Pakhangba replied that she could not become so as she belonged to the people who came along with Porreiton She could only be a woman in flesh and blood, but he could as he came down from the heaven.

This account is interpreted by some scholars as an indication of Laisna belonging to a different race or tribe while some scholars think Laisna was a Naga girl<sup>1</sup> Both these two sets of scholars

1 The appellation Naga came into existence at a very late period long after the arrival of the Mau Shans (Ahoms) in Assam The Assamese people used to call those people of the hill by the name *Yoka* meaning people specially of the hills who lived in the northern parts of Nagaland It is perhaps from the word *Noka* the word or the name Naga derived There are different hypotheses of the origin of the name Naga When other Indian people who came to Assam had the contact with the Assamese first and hence they also used to call those hill people by that very Assamese word which further changed to Naga The word had further been strengthened by their earlier concept of a group of people called Nag(a) of the Indian mythology who professed the Nag(a) cult Thus finally the appellation Naga resulted



take Nongta Lairen Pakhangba an Aryan settler. This view is also seen on the footnote comments of the Cheitharol Kumbaba. In the said chronicle it is stated how the first seven kings beginning from Pakhangba died or disappeared, is not known and further express their views that the seven kings must have practised Vana-prastha as done by the big kings of India like Yudhisthira, Dhristarastra who abdicated the throne and left for forest to retire the rest of their lives

Some scholars of today feel Pakhangba is of a Shan tribe. However all of them seem to have agreed that Pakhangba was not a god.

In some accounts Pakhangba is said to have conquered Moirang and ruled there for exactly 100 years in addition to his 120 years of reign. The Moirang kings were thus the descendants of Pakhangba, but this account is seriously objected to by the people of Moirang. Besides these accounts there are hundreds of mystified accounts of Pakhangba. In all such accounts Pakhangba is described to have lived in several millenniums. He was found everywhere like an omnipresent.

In another set of accounts one king Kangba also known as Nongbal Kangba is said to have reigned for an absurd period of 500,000 years before Pakhangba. There was another king named Moriya Phamballacha who is said to have introduced the counting of the flux of time by the era system. Some scholars estimated the period of Moriya Phamballacha to be 1396 B. C. They have not shown the principle of their estimate. It is said that Moriya Phamballacha introduced the beginning of the year from the onset

Some British as well as Indian scholars commented that the Meitais or Manipuris were descended from the surrounding hill people, which however seems to be from the general Mongoloid appearance and similarity of culture in certain aspects. Their decision is rather too hasty. We will see how the Manipuris are related to the surrounding hill people in subsequent sections.

of monsoon. In some accounts Moriya Phamballacha is described to be the younger brother of king Kangba while in other manuscripts as son, and so on.

In another account Puleilomba the ancestor of the Angoms is shown as the father of Pakhangba. While in some other accounts it is mentioned that Luwang Langmaiba is the real father of Pakhangba but Puleilomba fostered him.

In addition to these accounts there are several other fables. In such fables the cattle of Nonghal Kangba are described to have changed to rocks etc etc.

We find almost all these sources available here, regard the reigning for 100 years to be quite a simple thing. All these sources are but history mixed with legends, imaginations and fables. We have some accounts of Moirang principality.

The present history may be divided into two parts namely, the unaccounted period and the accounted period. Upto the fifteenth century A D. the history of Manipur may be treated as unaccounted

Besides these types of accounts there is also another set of accounts in which the ruling clan of Manipur is described to be the descendants of Arjuna the Pandava of the Mahabharata epic. It is stated that Manipur is the very Manipur of the Mahabharata as mentioned in the Aswamedha Parva and there was one king named Chitrabhanu who ruled this kingdom, who had a daughter named Chitrangada. While Arjuna was on his self exile following a violation of understanding among the Pandava brothers he met Chitrangada and married her. She bore him a son named Babrubahan. Babrubahan succeeded his maternal grand-father who had no son. In the Mahabharata war king Babrubahan was not invited. When the Mahabharata war was over an Aswamedha sacrifice was performed by the Pandavas in which Arjuna followed the sacrificial horse with a strong force. In course of the movement the horse was captured by Babrubahan and a war was fought between Arjuna and Babrubahan, and Arjuna was defeated in the

battle. The legend had gone to such an extent that there is a pastoral land known as Takyel which is said to be the battle field where Arjun's forces were vanquished. Hence the name Tak-yel derived where the word '*Tak-(pu)*' means 'to vanquish'.

The supporters of this story claim that since the time of the Mahabharata wave after wave of Aryan settlers came to Manipur and even established kingdoms in Burma. In Burmese chronicles it is said that one Sakiyan king named Abhi Raja came to Burma and established a kingdom there in 923 B.C.

They therefore believe that the Aryans passed through Manipur and established kingdoms in Burma. Thus they hold the view that Pakhangba was an Aryan settler, and gave him the name Javistha Pakhangba. It may be noted that the Sakyas were not Aryan tribes, they were Mongoloids belonging to the Himalayan or neo-Tibetan tribes. Details may be seen in subsequent sections.

This is the background from which we are to synthesize a sober history based on the following analysis.

(1) How old are the land masses of Manipur? (2) Does it support any autochthone? If not from where did the inhabitants migrate? (3) Should we try to ascertain a rough period of early settlement? (4) Is our device perfectly reliable? (5) What are the historical records which support our findings? (6) In the absence of autochthones, what were the tribes or races that migrated to this land? (7) Did they speak the same language? (8) What was their standard of civilization? (9) How did the different dialects coalesce to form Meiteilon or Manipuri language? (10) How and when did the name Meitei come into existence? (11) What was their religious belief? (12) What was the early name of Manipur? etc.

These are some of the most serious parts of our project. We shall try to give a positive solution to it. Our first step should be the elimination of legends, fables, myths and imaginations from all

sources. While discussing the above questions our only guide in the absence of any archeological evidence will be the history of the surrounding land and people, the history of migration with special reference to the surrounding areas, the history of formation of sub-races and sub-languages besides the history and other literary accounts of this land as found to-day. The literary accounts appear at the first instance to give false results but if we handle them carefully, they supply us immense material for the reconstruction. Finally our findings are put to severe scientific tests for their chastity. Thus we reconstruct the history of Manipur as follows.

We have reliable accounts of almost all the major tribes or races surrounding Manipur. We have reliable history of Bengal, Assam and Burma. The Burmese history, particularly the accounts of Sakyas, Pongs (Mau Shans) gives us a foundation of our project. The Pong accounts are in good chronological order. In early medieval period no reference of Manipur is found either in the history of Assam or of Bengal. Leaving aside the standard texts, we will discuss some of the accounts.

So our attention is directed to the fabulous, half-fabulous, myth or any other source that are available in Manipur for critical examination. We pick up the following, (1) Cheitharol Kumbaba, (2) Ningthourol Lambuba, (3) Poireiton Khunthok, and (4) Leithak Leikharol, Panthoibi Khongkul, Sanamahi Laikal, Naothingkhong Phambal Kaba etc. etc.

(1) Cheitharol Kumbaba : It is a chronology of the present ruling clan of Manipur. Its entry begins with Pakhangba the first king of the ruling clan. It records day to day events with dates. It gives names of successive kings of over 70 kings from Pakhangba to the ruler of 1949 A.D. It is written in modern Meiteilon or Manipuri language, and hence it is a recasted account. More details are discussed in the section on Treatment on Kumbaba

(2) Ningthourol Lambuba : This book deals mainly with the events associated with naming places. Besides Cheitharol Kumbaba

this is the only source that gives us valuable information. If it is handled carefully the text itself is a history. It does not mention any date. However this account is also not free from possible errors. In this text geneological lines and activities of every queen are given. As most literary accounts of Manipur do, Ningthourol Lambuba gives emphasis on the female lines. This is a very distinct characteristic of the Meitei accounts. The text begins with the mother of Pakhangba. It gives the parentage of Pakhangba's mother, wife and so on.

(3) Poireiton Khunthok. This is an account of migration of Poireiton one of the earliest settlers. The central theme of the text is quite all right. The central theme is that Poireiton migrated to this land with a horde of followers. In course of the migration Poireiton lost his dearest sons and daughters. They came through some perilous routes. Then they finally arrived in this land. The details of the book is not free from incoherences. The gist of the text is as follows: A mole came to Khamnung the land of death and requested Thongaren the King of Khamnung whose capital was at Khamnung Sawa to come to their land and rule them. King Thongaren enquired who were the earlier settlers. The mole replied there were King Kangba, Moriya Phamballaoha etc. who were living there. Then Thongaren agreed to move to the land which they called 'Tai pang' Thongaren asked his younger brother Poireiton for the migration as he was old enough. But Poireiton said, as he was a widower he did not like to go alone without a wife. Thongaren asked his first wife to accompany her brother-in-law as his wife, she refused. Then Thongaren asked his second wife Leima Leinaotabi to accompany her brother-in-law as his wife, she agreed, then they moved with a horde of followers. Thus they migrated from their homeland. While they were on their way they met several people including the Chakpas who used to cremate their dead bodies which Poireiton and his party looked with horror.

It will be seen that king Kangba physically lived in the 11th century A.D. and Moriya Phamballaoha probably ruled the Kege principality in the early part of the 12th century A.D. It

will also be seen in subsequent sections that references have been made for persons who would actually live on this earth 500/600 years after Poireiton's migration. Names of places which were given in the 13th century A.D. are also found to have been given by Poireiton. The Chakpas who migrated at about the beginning of the 12th century A.D. or some what later is also stated to have been met by Poireiton. However there is no impossibility of meeting the Chakpas somewhere in northern Burma who were by that time known as Loi tribe. Name of places to have been roamed by Poireiton is more concentrated towards the southern side but occasionally on the mountains and deep gorges on the northern side which is practically not a possible route is also found. All these entries very often tempt people to think and say Poireiton came from the south. It also appears that the text writer is more associated with the topography of the south.

Some accounts describe Pakhangba to be a contemporary of Poireiton. So some scholars feel Moriya Phamballacha must have been an early people taking the date of Pakhangba as 33 A.D. as found in Cheitharol Kumbaba. Moreover from the language and the writing, it appears, the scholar who prepared the history of migration of Poireiton, must have lived somewhere in the Moirang principality at about 1400-1500 A.D.

From the text we can deduct the social condition prevalent at about the 15th century A.D. and later. The Tibeto-Burmans were very much afraid of burning the dead bodies. There was a practice of marrying their own sistre-in-laws among the tribes of Poireiton. They were rice eaters and non-vegetarians. They ate beef and pork. They belonged to a comparatively more advanced group of people than the earlier settlers.

✓(1) Leithak Leikharol, Panthoibi Khongkul etc. Most of these accounts can support the first and the second accounts stated above. They are also found to have contained much incoherences. Some examples may be cited here. According to one source Luwang Langmaiba is said to be the father of Pakhangba, while in another

account Pakhangba had a wrestling combat with Poireiton where Luwang Punshiba was the judge. Poireiton was defeated and his younger sister Laisa-ra was taken to wife by Pakhangba. Luwang Punshiba is the fourth descendant of Poireiton according to several sources which appear to be more reliable and Luwang Langmaiba is the grandson of Luwang Punshiba. If we take all the accounts together it is found that Pakhangba must have lived before his birth. Such accounts are not separately discussed here. They may be referred to when required. All these accounts no doubt contain names of the historical characters.

A non-mystified historical account with contradictory facts is given below. (1) "*Muyim Luwangnu mikouna Nunghanna tenghanabadi thongbu tingbi, lambubu mungbi yenpakpu waikon-O kouye*". Nongmaijing Chingoiba.

(2) "*Muyim Shelloy-langmaiva, lambubudi mungbi-O, yenpakpudi waikon-O, thongbudi tingbi-O, touna kouye*". Ningthourol Lambuba.

In the above example, the account Nongmaijing Chingoiba gives *tingbi* for bridge, *mungbi* for road, and *waikon* for umbrella as the dialect of the Luwangs a neo-Tibetan tribe, whereas Ningthourol Lambuba refers it to be the dialect of the Shelloy Langmai a Tibeto-Burman tribe. So the conclusion would be that either Nongmaijing (Chingoiba or Ningthourol Lambuba or both are wrong. However it must be noted that Ningthourol Lambuba is more dependable.

Most of the Luwang chieftains were given the title Luwang Punshiba. There was one Luwang chieftain named Hongnem during the reign of Ura Konthouba. He was also given the said title. Some accounts simply refer Hongnem as Luwang Punshiba. Some local pandits took him for Luwang Punshiba who died before Pakhangba ascended the throne and wrote books with this reference. Naotheringkhong was sent to the Luwangs for training in the art of administration when Hongnem was the chieftain of the

Luwangs. Upto the time of his staying in the Luwangs Naothingkhong was known by the name Hongnemyoy Khunjao. While Naothingkhong was in the Luwangs the Luwang chieftain Hongnem died.

Two accounts namely Naothinkhong Phambal Kaba and Moirang Ningthourol Lambuba mention the marriage of Naothingkhong with Leima Namoon Chaobi the daughter of Sanarakkha the Moirang chieftain, while the former was taking assylum in the Khumans. It is a clear case of interpolation (1) Moirang principality was non-existent during the reign of Ura Konthouba which will be seen in subsequent sections. However the Kege principality was there (2) Ningthourol Lambuba which is more dependable does not mention it but refers only the marriage of Santing Nganbi Narum Kangbi the daughter of Amkoi the Khuman chief to Naothingkhong. The Khumans by that time inhabited in the areas lying to the north west of Imphal with Patsoi as its southern limit (3) Chungkhu Telleiba the Mouang Chief and uncle of Yoiren Tompokpi, is found to be the fourth descendant of Sanarakkha according to Sagei Salanot published by the State Kala Akademi, Manipur; and Thangbi Lanthaba the Porrei king who married Yoiren Tompokpi with a great episode is found to be the 20th descendant of Ura Konthouba according to Cheitharol Kumbaba and Ningthourol Lambuba. It is impossible to match the 4th and the 20th descendants of two contemporaries.

Besides such incoherences, most of the *Puyas* narrate stories like folk tales and fables. We examine some of them as follows. According to Leithak Leikharol, Puddin etc King Kangba is said to have nine sons namely Konggoi, Tema, Yangma, Tesarot, Urenhanba, Urenkhuba, Irem, Khabu and Langba. Some of them settled here to continue to rule on this land some thousands of years before Pakhangba, while some had been sent to different lands to establish kingdoms.

The intention of this fable seems to be that the Nonghal tribes wanted to project their tribe as the earliest and the progenitors of



the different races including the Pongs. Kangba is said to be a Nongbal tribe. Actually Kangba was a Kang tribe a Tibeto-Burman descent from the Teru state of China. This legend is probably borrowed from the Ngai Lao.

According to Thanglon Khongchat, Pakhangba married Leisuk Leisoi Yambi and Lilanpi. They gave birth to two sons namely Pong and Paikhu. Pakhangba gave to his son Pong a sword named Tarung and a stick named Chingsu Thang. He sent his son Pong to the east with above two weapons to guard the land.

The above text is one of the invented accounts of Pakhangba possibly developed in the 16th century A.D. The aim of this story is to project Pakhangba as an omnipresent progenitor. The Pongs were regarded by the Meiteis with honour and love since the time of Naotingkhong. Most of such accounts fail to project Pakhangba to be the progenitor of any weak and backward tribe by that time. On the other hand weak and backward tribes project their ancestors to be related to Pakhangba by some way or the other.

Some pandits take such tales as real historical account and draw their conclusions assertively that Pongs were the descendants of Pakhangba. They also interpret the meaning of the name of the Pong prince who founded the Pong kingdom in the words of modern Meiteilon or Manipuri language and say conclusively *Khunlai* means Lord of village. In modern Meiteilon *Khun* means village and *lai* means god or lord. While taking the decision the scholars failed to investigate what should have been the meaning of the said word in the dialect of the Pongs. In the dialect of the Pongs *Khun* means prince and *lai* means younger, thus *Khunlai* means 'prince-younger'. So *Khunlai* has nothing to do with the Meiteilon vocabulary 'village lord'.

In *Sararen Macha Lamyenba*, and *Lamyen Lairik Pong-ga Meitei-ga*, it is said that the Pong king *Sukanpha* was formerly called *Samngam*. The Pong king wanted to construct a house, and sent some of his men to the jungle to cut down woods and pull them to the site of the house. While doing so a tiger came out

tying a cloth on his waist and joined the pulling of the woods. His men expressed their wonder how a tiger came out and took part in the task. Since then Samngam had changed his name and become known as Sukan-pha

While Sukanpha was on the throne he sent his younger brother Samlungfa for conquering the neighbouring countries. After conquering the eastern countries Samlungfa then set his expeditions towards the western countries. In that expedition Sukanpha gave his younger brother the following articles. (1) a purple gem which could charm men when looked at (2) a sword sharp enough to sabre the head in a single stroke. (3) a spear having magical power which when thrown could have thousand holes to the victims, (4) a bow when shot with an arrow could give rise to thousand flying arrows, (5) a shield with a magical power to protect from all weapons, (6) a magical rope when thrown to an object, the object would be tied up by the rope and (7) a *theng-gu yaiyoiba* meaning magical hammer, when thrown it would continue its hitting without stop.

Samlungfa after conquering Basa, by a short cut came to the land of the Mayangs and finally arrived at Ngapuram Chingjeng after crossing the river Gwai and Khebu Chingjeng. Feeling that his horses and elephants would trample the land of the Meiteis, Samlungfa moved by a northerly route. On hearing that Samlungfa was not visiting his country Khongtekeha the Poirei king rushed to where Samlungfa was resting and asked why he ( Samlungfa ) was not visiting his country and further requested him to stay in his country for some time. Samlungfa accepted the invitation but came with only few of his men to the Meiteis lest his grand forces might cause harm to the land of the Meiteis. When Samlungfa was with the Meiteis he said on seeing the big stone slab at Kangla-main, one pandit from each of Basa, Klhagi, Ava, Pong and Meitei would come one day and administer the country sitting on the stone slab.

After examining the above text it is found to be something like the folk tales of 'Pebet and houdong lamboiba'. Over and above this, the defeat of the Poirei in the hand of Samlungfa is very

carefully sublimated. We had been forced so long to believe such cock and bull stories on sentimental grounds. However the story shows a reflection on historical characters. Samlungfa had one brother named Sukanpha. Samlungfa invaded Manipur, by that time known as Poirei, at about 1220 A.D. The Pongs had a fabulous account of their coming to a new land where they carved the Pong kingdom, and so on.

It is very likely that a very large number of accounts were written by scholars who were possibly citizens of the Kege-Moirang principality. It is also quite evident from the different accounts that all the tribes agreed to the supremacy of the Poirei kings over them. The ancestor of the Poirei kings more particularly the Mangang kings were their target of attack in literature. The Nongbal chroniclers projected their ancestor or rather their unifier Puleilomba to be the father of Pakhangba taking the advantage of concealment of the father of Pakhangba by the Mangang chroniclers who in turn projected Pakhangba to be a man coming down from heaven and born without a real father except a *nongloom* meaning 'cloud-egg' brought from the sun by *Tauroinai* a god who lives in the Moon, to the ignorant and superstitious masses. Moreover the Nongbal chroniclers on the otherhand put their line of geneology before Pakhangba.

Modern historians and commentators on existing accounts, including European scholars, are also not free from the problems of the above nature. Capt. Pemberton took his account from Manipur source sometime during the period 1825-35 A.D. while he was residing in Manipur. The dates entered in the Cheitharol Kumbaba prior to 1485 A.D. are forged dates. Details may be seen in the section on Treatment on Kumbaba. However most scholars noticed the discrepancies of the dates of the Manipuri account with that of other accounts particularly with the Pong accounts of the later medieval period. Later scholars, both Indians and Europeans took their source from that of Cap. Pemberton and wrote several books believing they were authentic dates. One serious problem may be pointed out here. The date of Naothingkhong is antedated at least

by 552 years in the Choitharol Kumbaba. Naothingkhong is said to have ruled exactly for almost an absurd period of 100 years in the said text. During his reign a Pong prince named Samlug(fa) invaded Manipur and defeated him. Taking the date of Naothingkhong to be authentic and the name of the Shan prince to be a wrong one, Mr. W. Shaw writes : "In 707 A.D. the king of Thailand defeated the Manipur king Nao-Thing-Khong which is a Kuki name. After that Manipur was ruled by the Thais for 10 years".<sup>1</sup> It may be mentioned here that the former name of Naothingkhong is Hongnemyoy Khunjao. When he became king he assumed the name Naothingkhong. It is not known what was the fancy behind it. Again taking the account of Mr. W. Shaw, Dr. Gogoi writes : "Since there was no independent kingdom in Thailand in that early period the reference is apparently to Ko-lo-feng's conquest of Upper Burma and Assam including Manipur in the eighth century A.D. as described in the T'ang history".<sup>2</sup> The reference in T'ang history is apparently to Ko-lo-feng's conquest of Pyu (P'iao) in about 760 A.D. He has also further written, "It is recorded in the ancient Manipuri chronicles that the Manipur king Naothingkhong, who acknowledged the suzerainty of Nan Chao under Ko-lo-feng sent well trained troupe of musicians, singers, and instrumental musicians to the imperial courts of China as a goodwill mission. It must have been a mission to Hsuan Tsung's court",<sup>3</sup> and further quoted, "Luce has pointed that, 'its stages are given in some details by the Chinese minister Chia Tan (Kia Tau) at the end of the 8th century A.D. One route led due west Yung-Ch'ang to Teng-Yuch, and thence approximately by Waingmow (Li-Shui town), Mogaung (Au-hsi town) and the Tezu Gap to Gauhati (Kamarupa) and Magadha. The other south-west from Yung-C'ang to the Pyu capital and so to Gauhati and Manipur".<sup>4</sup> The said troupe of goodwill mission to China was sent by Pyu in the year 802 A.D. headed by one Pyu prince "The prince's followers sang songs which contained Sanskrit words".<sup>5</sup> The Pyu kingdom was at Prome.

1 Dr. Gogoi : The Tai and the Tai kingdoms, page 67 foot note.

2. *ibid.*, page 67 foot note.

In fact there is no ancient Manipuri chronicle which records the acceptance of suzerainty of Nan Chao under Ko lo-feng by the Manipur prince Naothingkhong who is also stated to have sent well trained troupe of musicians, singers etc to the Imperial court of China. The scholar seems to have taken his source from W Yumjao Singh who had correspondences with the Historical and Antiquarian Studies, Assam, sometime in 1950 A D before his book An early History of Manipur got posthumously published. W Yumjao Singh feels the said troupe was from Manipur with a different date

Ko lo-feng never came to Imphal valley and in fact, he never defeated Naothingkhong since the latter was yet to be born at least 400 years hence. Ko-lo-feng possibly came to Kamarupa through some parts of Nagaland from Yun-nan if he visited Kamarupa at all. He ascended the throne in 748 A D and died in 778 A D. By about that period there was no human civilization in Imphal valley. It was an uninhabited land, the earliest human settlement in Imphal valley is believed to be a little earlier than 800 A D, after the invasion of Ko-lo-feng in Upper Burma and Tibet. More details may be seen in subsequent sections.

3 *ibid.*, page 66.

4 *ibid.*, page 71.

5 W S. Desai : A Pageant of Burmese History, page 9

## THE POPULATION HYPOTHESIS

Imphal Valley the place where the Meiteis were born as stated in earlier section is located in the sub-Himalayan region. It belongs to young land masses on the surface of the earth. Modern man started to have evolved some 40-50 thousand years back. Anthropologists believe that human settlement started in three major zones of the earth. They were central Asia, central Europe and central Africa. Human settlement on other parts were migrated from the above places. People living in sub-Himalayan regions were one of the latest immigrants. We have no record to know from what time man began to settle in Imphal valley. A general study does not indicate any human habitation in B.C. People living in Imphal valley were all migrated people without a single exception. There are no autochthones in Imphal valley.

In the absence of records of early human settlement in Imphal valley we are to devise some means of ascertaining a reasonable period of first human settlement or civilization on this virgin land. We have at our disposal a concrete material, that is, the population of the Meiteis on this earth. It must have a beginning. From the first immigrants conceived as the Meiteis, it began to grow in number by births and by addition of new immigrants with occasional reductions by war, epidemic and other natural calamities. Under these circumstances the Meitei population began to grow to about one million in 1981 A.D.

The Meitei population in the Imphal valley is a little less than one million according to 1981 A. D. census. According to the Malthusian theory of population growth, the population is doubled in 25 years provided that there is no war or any other calamities which destroy population during that period. Taking the population in 1981 as 1 million, it would have been zero in 1481 A. D. in that scale. But because of variable factors such as devastation of

population by war and other causes pure Malthusian cannot give fair results. Certain allowances are to be made for it. The period from 1906 to 1831 A.D. the scale can be applied with reasonable accuracy since modern sciences of medicine are applied to the population. Accordingly the Meitei population in 1906 A. D. on that scale is 1.25 lakhs. This figure fairly agrees with that of census. Let us devise a means for ascertaining the growth of Meitei population from 0 A.D. to 1906 A.D.

Prior to 1906 A.D. there were no means of checking epidemics of cholera and small pox. There were frequent wars, clashes, raids and counter raids. Even king Nara Singh died of cholera in 1850 A.D. Since the inception of history of the Meiteis, it appears, the difference between the birth rate and death rate was never high. As a result the growth of Meitei population was very low otherwise the Meitei population by now would have been several millions. In certain periods the rate on the growth of Meitei population could have been even negative. Owing to these variable factors the Meitei population from 1831 to 1906 A. D., according to available records, is found to have been increased by four times only though it should have been increased by eight times. The population with all probability in 1831 A. D. is about 25 thousands only. In 1819 A.D. there was the most devastating war with the Burmese known as *Uhahi taret khuntakpa*. In this war about one third of the original population was either killed or taken as captives. The remaining population either took refuge to jungles and hills or fled to Cachar and elsewhere. Among those who settled in Cachar and Sylhet some settled permanently without losing their identity. Some got mixed with the Burmese invaders. The Meitei population just before this war was of the order of 55 thousands.

Ghambir Singh with his cousin, Nara Singh re-established the Kingdom of Manipur after defeating and expelling the Burmese in 1825 A.D. barely with a population of a little over 10 thousands. After the re-establishment of the kingdom the Meiteis started

pouring into the valley from their hideouts in jungles and hills. It should be remembered that some section of the population who were in good terms with the Burmese invaders stayed in the valley in good shape during the occupation period. With the above stated influx the population rose to about 25 thousands in 1831 A.D.<sup>1</sup>

One very important material in the construction of the growth rate is that there is a recorded figure of the Muslim population from 1606 A.D. Let us devise a means of ascertaining the growth rate of population on these recorded figures. Different records reveal that the number of Muslims who settled in the valley after the defeat during the period of Khagemba is about 100 souls but Cheitharol Khumbaba gives an exaggerated figure. With an estimated figure of about 100 in 1606 A.D. let us devise the growth rate of Muslim population.

Taking the death rate in the Malthusian scale as unit, in the periods 1906-1881, 1881-1856, and 1856-1831 the death rates are increased by 10%, 20% and 50% respectively in view of progressively unscientific living conditions prevailed during those days specially during the period 1856-1831 where a very high death rate of 50% has been applied.

In the period 1806-1831 the population was reduced to nearly half the original figure as discussed earlier. As we move further

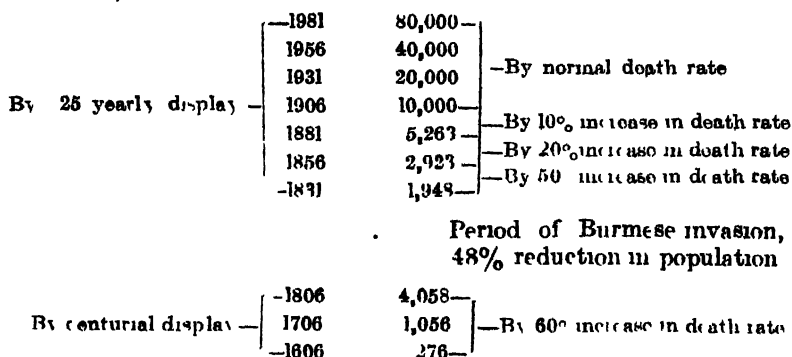
1 Major W McCulloch, a British agent in Imphal who undertook the project of surveying the heights of hills and mountains of Manipur for the first time, estimated the population of the Meitais excluding the hill people to be about 50,000 souls in 1859 A.D. See, R. Brown Statistical Accounts of Manipur (1873), reprinted in 1973 A.D. page 13

One point to be noted is that the Meitei unit of counting 10,000 (ten thousand) is called 'one lakha' by that period. But now one lakha is equivalent to 100,000 (one hundred thousand) i.e. the Indian unit of one lakh or lac. Hence in some manuscripts the above mentioned figure is found to have been written as 5 lakhas. Further it may also be noted that the conventional method of representing a number by numerals was not uniformly adopted. It is found in some manuscripts, for example, 'one thousand two hundred and twenty seven' is represented by 100020027 without any punctuation.



backwards from 1806 to 1606 the death rate is made still higher to account various causes. So, for this period let us increase the death rate upto 60% above the normal With these norms a chart on the growth of Muslim population is prepared as follows

According to 1981 A D census the Muslim population is about 80,000



According to this chart the Muslim population in 1606 A D. is 276 For other errors let us make an allowance of  $\pm 10\%$  and obtain the figure as 250/300 When the Muslims settled in Manipur they were given Meitei wives, as they did not come with their families So, for 100 Muslim soldiers the Muslim population is 200 Thus the obtained figure 250/300 is fairly reasonable \*

As these norms fairly agree with the recorded growth of Muslim population, they may also be applied to the general Meitei population, and we may obtain a projected population of the Meiteis by 1606 A D Beyond 1606 A D a new norm is to be found out otherwise the Meitei population would have been reduced to zero by the 11th century A D So the death rate for the period from 1606 A.D to 0 A D. is further increased to 90% even though

2 Nogsamei's account gives a figure in a somewhat vague way It states, "lanhing 15 ga tenggon 97 mak loklouye" which seems to be the number of Muslim soldiers in the lot of that war captives excluding the other 1000 men of different trades and tribes Ningshouei Lambuba mentions people of Bodo and Kuki origin in that 1000 lot

the increase of 90% in the death rate is too high. Any small community whose death rate is 90% above the normal death rate is on the verge of extinction. It is a practical case of stagnant population growth. However population extinction is always associated with natural calamities like severe earth movements, dehydrations etc We have no record or tradition for such calamities.

The Meitei population in Manipur is about 1,000,000 in 1981 A.D.

By 25 yearly display	1981	1,000,000	—By normal death rate —By 10% increase in death rate —By 20% increase in death rate —By 50% increase in death rate
	1956	500,000	
	1931	250,000	
	1906	125,000	
	1881	65,789	
	1856	36,549	
	1831	24,366	

..... Period of Burmese invasion,  
48% reduction in population

By centurial display	1806	50,782	—By 60% increase in death rate —By 90% increase in death rate
	1706	13,213	
	1606	3,439	
	1506	2,345	
	1406	1,641	
	1306	1,105	
	1206	757	
	1106	518	
	1006	355	
	906	243	
	806	166	
	706	114	
	606	78	

After neglecting further two digits we obtain the population of the Meiteis in 606 A.D. as 78 only. By advancing further two centuries we can safely say that the Meitei population vanishes at about the 5th century A.D. Since we cannot imagine a one man immigrant arriving the valley started increasing population, we may very reasonably say that the first batch of the immigrants arrived in a group of sizable number of men, women and children, say 100 or

200 people. It is therefore seen that the optimum period of human settlement in Imphal valley is about the latter part of the 8th century A.D. Hence we assume c. 800 A.D. as the date on which the first human settlement started on this valley.

Determination of growth of population by this type of hypothesis cannot be applied universally because of unknown variable factors. But in our case we have very good accounts.

## THE TREATMENT ON KUMBABA

Let us examine critically the so-called imperishable monument "Cheitharol Kumbaba" in respect of its datings which create not only confusion but also mislead the young learners and scholars as well. It is a chronicle of the Mangang rulers. Mangang is a clan of the Meiteis. More details may be seen in the section on Clan formation. The published Cheitharol Kumbaba is stated to have been re-written by (1) Chirom Shyamram and (2) Oinam Anandaram in the year 1780 A.D. when the original copy was lost as mentioned in the text itself. It is a fact that the Meiteis learnt the art of maintaining chronicles from the Shans possibly during the reign of Kiyamba (1467-1508 A.D.). In this book Nongta Lairen Pakhangba is described to have descended from the heaven in the year 3135 Kaliyuga Era corresponding to 33 A.D. It may be noted that Kaliyuga Era was postulated in the year 499 A.D. by the renowned Indian astronomer Aryabhata I ( 476-525 A.D. ) of Pataliputra. He calculated from the available knowledge of astronomy of his time that the seven planets were in conjunction in the fixed Siddhantic Mesadi on a day corresponding to the 17th February 3102 B.C. The conjunction was described as the Saptagrahajoga and he assumed that Kaliyuga began from that moment. His calculations are however found to be wrong.

Cheitharol Kumbaba is a chronicle recording day to day events of the Mangang kings who were later known as the kings of Manipur. There are different copies of Cheitharol Kumbaba in manuscripts in the hands of local pandits. All such Kumbabas start chronology from Kiyamba. But the printed one was the copy of the book found in the royal custody. Uptil this date, the printed Cheitharol Kumbaba is regarded as book of authenticity. However Kumbabas are the only source which record date.

In Cheitharol Kumbaba, it is written that Pakhangba reigned for 120 years, his son Khuiyoi Tompok reigned for 110 years, and

his grandson Taothingmang reigned for 100 years. It is seen that all the ruling periods are in a systematic descending order of importance. As Pakhangba reigned for 120 years we can safely conclude that he lived at least for 150 years. Because a man becomes efficient only when he is physically strong and acquires proper wisdom This stage is reached when he is of about 30 years of age or a little earlier Literary accounts of Manipur indicate that Pakhangba was invited to become king. So it is presumed that Pakhangba ascended the throne at the age of about 30 years and he reigned for 120 years Hence Pakhangba lived for 150 years i.e. the longevity of Pakhangba is 150 years. Pakhangba must have married quite young, say, at the age of about 16 or 17 years when the biological needs were felt as done in most primitive or early societies. So there is every reason to say that Pakhangba had begotten his son Khuiyoi Tompok when he was about 20 years of age or earlier When Pakhangba died at the age of 150 years, his son Khuiyoi Tompok was 130 years old. Khuiyoi Tompok ascended the throne at the age of 130 years and reigned for another 110 years. So Khuiyoi Tompok must have lived at least for 240 years When Khuiyoi Tompok died at the age of 240 years his son Taothingmang a boy of 220 years of age, with the same reasoning as above, ascended the throne and reigned for another 100 years. So Taothingmang lived for 320 years By similar reasoning a table of longevity of 11 successive kings beginning from Pakhangba is given below Cheitharol Kumbaba mentions the 11 kings were in an unbroken line and there was no interregnum. Literary source like Ningthourol Lambuba mentions that Taothingmang was not the eldest son of Khuiyoi Tompok. Even then the difference would have been only for a few years. Similarly Naokhamba is also said to be the first son begotten by his father but a second son of the mother. Naokhamba is the 6th successor of Pakhangba. Taking into consideration of all these variations too, there will be no appreciable change in the deducted longevities.

Sl. No.	Name of king	Reigning period (in years )	Longevity ( in years )
1.	Pakhangba	120	150
2.	Khuiyoi Tompok	110	240
3.	Taothingmang	100	320
4.	Khui Ningomba	15	315
5.	Pengshiba	15	310
6.	Kaokhangba	17	307
7.	Naokhamba	17	304
8.	Naophangba	90	374
9.	Sameirang	50	404
10.	Ura Konthouba	90	474
11.	Naothingkhong	100	554

A man living for 554 years and taking administration at the age of 454 years is indeed unimaginable and is biologically absurd. The average longevity of the above 11 kings is 350 years as against the average longevity of 27 years of an Indian in the first half of the 20th century A.D.

We will now compare the above data with those of the accounted period. The existing history of Manipur is accounted to a reasonable extent from Kiyamba (1467-1508 A.D.) with a reliable chronology. We prepare a statistical data of 11 kings beginning from Kiyamba.

Sl. No.	Name of king	Reigning period ( in years )	Longevity recorded in Cheitharol Kumbaba ( in years )	Deducted longevity (in years)
1.	Kiyamba	41	64	64
2.	Koiremba	4	24	48
3.	Lamkiyamba	11	38	39
4.	Nonginphaba	1	11	20
5.	Kabomba	18	24	19
6.	Tangjamba	3	29	21
7.	Chalamba	17	48	18
8.	Mungyamba	35	52	36

Sl. No.	Name of king	Reigning period ( in years )	Longevity recorded in Cheitharol Kumbaba ( in years )	Deducted longevity (in years)
9.	Khagemba	55	79	66
10.	Khunjaoba	15	45	61
11.	Paikhomba	32	53	73

Notwithstanding the figures of actual longevity as recorded, the deducted longevity shows a deviation from the normal in Sl. No 4 and Sl No 5 to a negative value of birth. So in between Sl. No. 1 and Sl No 5 there is a broken link. Referring to the text, it is found that when Lamkiyamba died he was succeeded by his son Nonginphaba at the age of 10 years. Nonginphaba and his mother Changnungphabi the widow queen were murdered by Angoupamba Kiyamba the paramour of the widow queen over a trifling issue in the same year of ascension. Hence Nonginphaba left no issue but he was succeeded by Kabomba possibly a half brother. The average longevity of these 11 kings is 42 years which is quite reasonable as compared with the earlier set.

So it is quite evident from the above analysis that there is a foul play in the datings of Cheitharol Kumbaba. We will try to see it in this section. It is a common occurrence that the criminals leave some trails behind them. On page 110 of Cheitharol Kumbaba dealing on king Jai Singh ( Bhagyachandra ), an epoch making event has been recorded. The scholars who made the foul play were probably unaware of the fact that they would be caught of their foul play if the event was recorded.

The event was that in the year 1760 A D Bhagyachandra introduced one new era of the Meitei Kangleipak ( Manipur ). Bhagyachandra with his two nobles namely Bhagyabati Thakur and Kabow Khumbongcha Maniram Singh Sidananda discussed for the introduction of a new era of this land along with a separate Luni-Solar calendar. So Khumbongcha Maniram Singh assisted by other five scholars namely (1) Taibangjam Soidam, (2) Chirom Shyamram, (3) Oinam Ananda Syam, (4) Yendremba Gangaram

and (5) Athokpa Samram, undertook the project. They started the work from Thursday, the 12th day of the month of Lunar Hiyangei of the year corresponding to 1760 A.D. Here Hiyangei is the name of a month of the Luni-Solar calendar. It took them five months to complete the work. For this splendid work Khumbongcha Maniram Singh was conferred the honour 'Chandra Siddhanta' the highest decoration in calendaric astronomy of that period. Later Khumbongcha Maniram Singh was known as Khumbong Chandra Siddhanta.

The astronomers compiled a table on the apparent motion of the Moon. They calculated with this compiled table the *thabans* or lunar dates or *tithis* of the Luni-Solar calendar. The central meridian of that calendar was Imphal with its Draghima and Akshyangsa. In this calendar the year begins at the moment of the ingress of the Sun in Mesh Rasi or Aries of the fixed zodiac in course of its motion along the ecliptic. Thus the year of this calendar is a Sidereal year. Its length is 365.25636 mean solar days and it is longer by 0.007 days than a Tropical year. However the most serious problem faced by the astronomers of that period was the determination of Solar eclipses. They could predict solar eclipse of the whole earth as one unit but could not develop mathematics for determining local visibilities. If the prediction of the Royal Astronomer failed, the Astronomer had to get a punishment known as *Panji Ishing-tingba* meaning 'Astronomer-water-soaking'. In this punishment he had to dip himself in water in the presence of nobles.

The epoch of the era which is known as *Chandrabda* corresponds to 789 A.D. i.e. 1 Chandrabda corresponds to 789 A.D. So in the year 1760 A.D. it was 971 Chandrabda. It may be noted that the name Chandrabda is not mentioned in the text of Choitharol Kumbaba, but one gold coin issued by Ghambhir Singh is found to have inscribed the era Chandrabda in it. He issued the gold coin in the year 1043 Chandrabda corresponding to 1832 A.D. assuming the coin was issued in the early part of the year. It is also learnt



that a gold coin issued by Bhagyachandra is also found to have inscribed Chandrabda but the writer has not seen it<sup>1</sup>. This era is found to have been used by Bhagyabati Panchanga a Luni-Solar calendar compilation founded by Panditraj Atombapu Sharma as *Manipurabda*. The date 789 A.D. should have been as done in most cases the date of accession of the founder of a dynasty or a prominent king to whose lines Bhagyachandra and Ghambhir Singh belonged. So we conclude this extrapolated epoch is the date of ascension of throne by Nongta i.e. Nongta Lairen Pakhangba since he is the founder of that dynasty.

Now let us examine how the above mentioned scholars found the date of Pakhangba as 789 A.D. The scholars had accurate chronology from Kiyamba to Moramba at their disposal as collected from secondary sources like other Kumbabas from local pandits even if the royal copy was lost, and from the mouth of other pandits as there had been a continuous names of Cheithabas beginning from 1485 A.D. From Kiyamba (date of ascension 1467 A.D.) to the last date of Moramba the next predecessor of Bhagyachandra, there is a span of 292 years ruled by 16 kings. So the average ruling period is of 18.25 years. With this mathematically deducted arithmetic mean the scholars projected the date of Pakhangba. From Pakhangba to Khumbomba the next predecessor of Kiyamba there are 37 kings. So the date they projected was  $(1467 - 18.25 \times 37)$  i.e. approximately 791 A.D., and for possible errors the astronomers enhanced the date by 2 years and finally obtained the date of Pakhangba as 789 A.D.

One very unfortunate thing is that there was probably no means at the disposal of the astronomers for cross checking the date they projected. It is believed if the scholars had some other materials for cross examinations they would have found out the date of Pakhangba nearer to reality. The date 789 A.D. as the date of Pakhangba is too early. It is antedated by about 200 years. We will see in subsequent sections that the date of Naothingkhong

1. Mutua Museum records, Keisampat, Imphal.

i.e. the date of ascension of Naothingkhong is the year 1215 A.D. as against 663 A.D. as entered in the Cheitharol Kumbaba, is fairly accurate. From Pakhangba to the next predecessor of Naothingkhong there are 10 kings. These 10 kings had to rule for a period of ( 1215 - 789 ) i.e. 426 years which is too high. It should have been of the order of 200 years or so.

In the published Cheitharol Kumbaba 'there is an indication that the re-writing of the Kumbaba was a thing done in the past as seen on page 9 of the said text. Had it been the same copy or the same Kumbaba of Bhagyachandra there should not have been such comments. The said Cheitharol Kumbaba records every event with a date in Saka Era e.g. "*Sakabda 1389 da Meiding-ngu Ningthoukhomba nonggaye, Phambal-da chahi 35 pallamye, Meiding-ngu Kiyamba chahi 24 da phambal kaye*". meaning 'Meitei king Ningthoukhomba died in 1389 Saka era, he was on the throne for 35 years; Meitei king Kiyamba ascended the throne at the age of 24 years'. Had the Cheitharol Kumbaba been the book of that of Bhagyachandra it should have entered the date in Chandrabda instead of Sakabda or at least concurrently with it. Even the coins issued by Bhagyachandra and Ghambhir Singh bore the legends of this era. It is now proved beyond all doubts that the present copy of Cheitharol Kumbaba is not the copy of that of Bhagyachandra.

Our next step will be the investigation of the period in which the forgery was committed. Jat Singh alias Bhagyachandra died in the year 1798 A.D. It was not done during his life time due to obvious reasons. So it was done after 1798 A.D. The forged date was first seen by Captain Pemberton while he was residing in Manipur. He inspected the chronicle for his diary. The captain could not read the script but he was interpreted. He entered in his diary the date of Pakhangba as 33 A.D. from that Kumbaba. The captain also noticed the presence of a Shan chronicle in the hand of an old man. He wanted the copy but he could not, however he was interpreted. The datings of this Shan chronicle too were

equally forged so as to match the two chronicles. Cap. Pemberton took his source of the Pongs from Manipur with the forged dates. It may be mentioned here that the Pong chronicles started from the year 568 A. D. with a half fabulous account of establishing a kingdom in the land of Mungrimungram by two brothers Khunlung and Khunlai. After the death of Khunlai his son Tyasaijiptyatpha ruled for forty years. He founded an era known as Aijepi Era. The epoch of the era is 639 A.D. and still it is used by the Burmese and the Naras. Even in the forged dates of the two chronicles some discrepancies are found indicating that the forgery was not done skillfully by comparing events of the two chronicles accurately. Many British scholars took their sources from the captain's diary and the Indian Scholars took their sources from the work of such British scholars. With these forged dates as basic tools many scholars deducted many interesting theories which will be seen in subsequent sections

It is seen that the forgery was committed just before the inspection of the chronicle by Capt. Pemberton. The inspection of the chronicle was sometime after 1825 A.D. the date in which Ghambhir Singh with his cousin Nara Singh expelled the Burmese forces upto lower Chindwin Valley the south-east boundary of Manipur, and before 1835 A.D. the date in which the captain first published his original diary. It is probable that the copy of Cheitharol Kumbaba of that of Bhagyachandra was lost during the 'Chahi taret khuntakpa' and when the kingdom of Manipur was re-established and when normalcy was returned, the paraphernalia of a royal court was necessary to be maintained. In that situation the Brahmin ridden court along with flatterers designed to upgrade the status of the Meitei kings to the demi-gods in the Aryandom and at the same time to depict them as the descendants of Aryans. In the wave of Aryanisation the Aryans regarded themselves as superior human species and the non-Aryans as inferior. This belief was also felt on this tiny state. Pakhangba was given the name Javistha of the Aryan pantheon. In order to fool the readers of the text the first seven kings are described as having not known to

where they died or to where they had gone, they became gods. This is an indication of early Aryan's last stage of life called Vanaprastha.\* With these aims they projected the date of Pakhangba to some years earlier than the beginning of the Saka Era. The reigning periods from Pakhangba to Khumbomba were then interpolated with several absurd figures. Truly speaking they had thwarted the sincere labour of the early scholars who introduced Chandrabda. Some pandits of to-day firmly believe the reigning of 120 years by Pakhangba is true because he was a man of the ancient period who lived very very long years.

Besides the above investigations the infallible evidence in support of our findings is the very language of the book which is of the 19th century A. D. Manipuri the most modern language. The book begins with and ends with the language of the same period. Not to speak of the 19th century language even the language of the early 17th century A D is found to be markedly different from that of Cheitharol Kumbaba.

It is also very likely that they discovered a copper plate belonging to the period of king Khongtekcha in which the rituals of Devi performed by the king was inscribed. Keeping the legend as it was they superimposed their forged date of Khongtekcha and buried again in order to make belief or befool the future generation. Quite incidentally the same copper plate was discovered in the early half of the twentieth century A. D. True to their design many scholars were fallen victims of it. They clamored the date of Khongtekcha is 763 A. D. in conformity with the date of Cheitharol Kumbaba. It may be noted that Khongtekcha ascended the throne at about 1250 A D where he had an all out war with a

2. In the foot note comment of Cheitharol Kumbaba, published by the Manipuri Sahitya Paushad, Imphal, 1967 A D., appearing on pages 2-3, it is stated, "The king of Manipur from the ancient time upto Naekhamba must have renounced the world of their wealth and throne in the later part of their lives just as done by the big big kings of India like Dhritarashtra, Yudhishthira'.

**Moriya prince named Oinu Seng Raja ( Oinusengba-ra-cha ). Based on these forged dates hundreds of books, scores of doctorate theses had been released.**

**We have conclusively proved beyond all doubts that the date 33 A.D. as the date of Pakhangba is a false date Hence it is rejected outright. The next step will be the assessing of a scientifically acceptable provisional date of Pakhangba and others after assimilating the subsequent discussions.**

## THE DATE OF NAOTHINGKHONG AND PAKHANGBA

A date is found in the Cheitharol Kumbaba which is a milestone of datings of the said chronicle. It is 1485 A.D. in which year a system of counting years by a peculiar method known as Cheithaba system was introduced. In this system of counting years, each year is given a specific name corresponding to the name of the person who took the stick in the Cheithaba function. It started from April 6, 1485 A.D. In that function of Cheithaba one person named Hiyangloy took the stick which they believed would carry all the ills of that year beginning from April 7, 1485 A.D. to April 6, 1486 A.D. So the year was given the name 'The year of Hiyangloy'. Similarly the next year on April 6, 1486 A.D. a Cheithaba function was held and one man named Namoy took the stick. Hence the year from April 7, 1486 to April 6, 1487 A.D. was given the name 'The year of Namoy' and so on. The practice continues till this date. Most people belonging to the old generation used to know the successive names of *Cheithabas* and when people wanted to know the age of a man they usually asked the name of the Cheithaba when he was born. Cheithaba is a part of the function of Cheiraoba. About Cheiraoba and Cheithaba it is exhaustively dealt in the chapter on Kiyamba in volume II. Since then a continuous name of Cheithabas are found and thus the datings from Kiyamba onwards are dependable, even though there may be errors which are within reasonable limits. There are 36 kings from Kiyamba ( 1467-1508 A.D. ) to Maharaj Kulachandra ( 1890-91 A.D. ). We proceed to determine the arithmetic mean of ruling period of follows.

We propose two sets namely 'Set A' and 'Set B'. In Set A a general average for the whole 36 kings is taken, while Set B the whole 36 kings are divided into intervals of 10 kings and the average of each set of 10 kings are recorded to examine the tendency of the average.

In calculating the average we take figures found in the Cheitharol Kumbaba.

Set A	Total reigning period	No. of kings	Average
1. Kiyamba (1467-1508 A.D.) to Kulachandra (1890-91 A.D.)	424	36	11.7
Set B			
1. Kiyamba (1467-1508 A.D.) to Khunjaoba (1652-1666 A.D.)	199	10	19.9
2. Paikhomba (1666-1897 A.D.) to Labanyachandra (1797- 1801 A.D.)	135	10	13.5
3. Madhuchandra (1801-1803 A.D.) to Bhadra (1824-1825 A.D.)	24	10	2.4
4. Ghambhir Singh (1825-1834 A.D.) to Kulachandra (1890- 1891 A.D.)	66	7	9.4

Set B indicates that there is a tendency of getting smaller in the average value from Khunjaoba onwards and reaching lowest near Bhadra. Again it shows a tendency of getting higher as it moves from Bhadra to Kulachandra. The figures of Set B also indicate that there are deviations from the general average. Historical accounts show that the period from Kiyamba to Khunjaoba is politically more stable than that of Madhuchandra to Bhadra. In short we get a rough idea when there is peace and tranquility there is the tendency of the average ruling period to go higher and vice versa.

Beginning from Pakhangba upto Ura Konthouba, as the available historical accounts, there was general peace and tranquility. Therefore the average ruling period tends to go higher. On the otherhand there were political turmoils from the period of Khongtekcha. Even there were periods without kings. So during the period from Naothingkhong to Ningthoukhomba, there is a

tendency of the average ruling period to move lower. However for a rough estimate we take the average for this period to be of the order of 10 years.

Taking into accounts of the historical events we break up the whole period from Naothingkhong to Ningthoukhomba into intervals of 10 kings and prepare sets as follows.

Name of kings	Reigning period	No. of kings	Average
1. Naothingkhong to Loiyumba	?	10	10 <sup>--</sup>
2. Loitongba to Thangbi Lanthaba	?	10	10 <sup>-</sup>
3. Kongyangba to Ningthou Khomba	?	7	10 <sup>+</sup>

(1) For Naothingkhong :

We know the date of ascension of Kiyamba. He ascended the throne in the year 1467 A.D. We deduct  $27 \times 10$  i.e. 270 years from 1467 A. D. as there are 27 kings from Naothingkhong to Ningthoukhomba We obtain the date as  $1467 - 270$  i.e. 1197 A D. For possible errors let us expand the date by 20 years on either sides and obtain a period from 1177 A.D. to 1217 A D. So Naothingkhong must have ascended the throne on any date from 1177 A D to 1217 AD. As we have taken the average of 10 a little higher than it should have been, more it is likely that Naothingkhong ascended the throne in the later part of the period Hence we allot a provisional date of Naothingkhong to be about 1215 A.D.

(2) For Pakhangba :

Now we proceed for the date of Pakhangba. As discussed earlier, the period from Pakhangba to Ura Konthouba was a period of peace and tranquility and the average would go higher than the average of Set A. So let us allot a little higher than 20 years, say, 21 years as the average ruling period and calculate as follows.

From the date of Naothingkhong i.e. 1215 A.D. we deduct  $10 \times 21$  years and obtain 1005 A.D. For possible errors let us expand the date by 25 years on either sides and obtain a period from



980 A. D. to 1030 A.D. So Pakhangba must have ascended the throne on any date within the period from 980 A. D. to 1030 A.D. In this case we take the earlier period in order to make it as early as possible, and say that Pakhangba ascended the throne at about 980 A. D.

Now we have found out two important dates in the history of Manipur namely, (1) 980 A.D. as the date of Pakhangba and (2) 1215 A.D. as the date of Naothingkhong. Our next step will be the verification of these dates. So we propose to put these dates to vigorous test for their exactness.

First we pick up 1215 A.D. the date of Naothingkhong. The Manipuri accounts refer that during his reign a Pong prince named Samlungfa, the younger brother of Sukanpha the Pong king came to Manipur after conquering Pasa and he stayed in Manipur for 10 years at Pong-Ingkhol. He left along the source of the Iril river. The event is recorded in Cheitharol Kumbaba. For more details it may be seen in the section on Samlungfa.

That, Naothingkhong married Chingurembi the Mayang princess. This event is found in a manuscript known as *Chingurembi Khonglup* a book dealing with the attendants of princess Chingurembi. She was a princess of Basa who shifted to Lamangdong. More details may be seen in the section on Chingurembi.

The Shan account refers that, Samlungfa the brother of the king of Moong Mao who ascended the throne in the year 1220 A.D. gained several notable victories in Upper Assam where he defeated the Chutiyas, as well as Arakan, Manipur and other countries.

Bengal accounts refer that, after the death of Lakshmana Sena in 1205 A.D., he was succeeded by his son Viswarupa Sena and reigned for 14 years. He had possibly two sons namely Surya Sena and Purusatoma Sena. The whereabouts of these two princes seem to have been lost and the throne was succeeded by their uncle Kesaba Sena. The two princes probably left Vikrampura the new Sena capital at about 1219 A.D. and arrived at Basa. More details may be seen in the section on Bengal.

The dates of Samlungfa of the Shan account are in good chronological order, and the date of Lakshmana Sena is also dependable. Hence we finally conclude that the date of Naothingkhong as 1215 A.D. is fairly accurate.

At the moment we are not in a position to take up cross references in respect of the date of Pakhangba with outside sources. Hence we are to rely mainly on literary sources of Manipur. For the moment we take the date of Pakhangba as c. 980 A.D. and it will be seen in subsequent sections that the date is fairly accurate.

## THE CONSTRUCTION OF TENTATIVE DATES

Let us try to construct a tentative date chart beginning from Poireiton to Ningthoukhomba. To determine mathematically the longevity of a single individual is an absurd thing. However mathematics can guide us in determining a cumulative chain of several individuals which can be utilised in our project. At the first stage, let us begin by allotting a comparatively long span of life of Pakhangba considering his activities and importance associated with him. No doubt there are instances in history where a king reigned for a very short period but full of eventful days and on the other hand there are also kings who reigned for a very long period without a single eventful day.

There is indication that a period of about 200 years beginning from Pakhangba to Urakonhouba was politically stable. There was less bloodshed for throne unlike later days. On the whole the said period may be treated as calm period. Therefore the reigning periods found in this period may be high. Ura Konthouba died at about 1215 A.D. This date is fairly reasonable as seen from the section on the date of Naothungkhong. So the period from 980 A.D. to 1215 A.D. is divided into 10 spells of ruling periods in such a way that variations have been incorporated taking into historical accounts available.

From 1215 A.D. to 1467 A.D. i.e. the period from Naothungkhong to the beginning of Kiyamba is a period of 262 years in which we have to accommodate 27 kings as found in Cheitharol Kumbaba. So the average ruling period is of about 9 years. It shows that some of the kings ruled for a very short period. Ruling for a very short period is often associated with (1) a sequence of very long ruling period of the predecessor, (2) an immature death of the ruler, (3) a succession of the throne by the younger brother, (4) clashes for throne and chaos. The period under consideration may be attributed to all the above causes. It is seen in Cheitharol

**Kumbaba** that after the death of **Khongtekcha** the throne remained vacant for a period of 11 years. The accuracy of that 11 years cannot be confirmed. However for the present we take it without any modification. After that interregnum **Keirencha** succeeded to the throne. We do not know the relationship between **Khongtekcha** and **Keirencha**. It is very likely that immediately after the death of **Khongtekcha** there was a clash for the throne or something of the kind

If we assume all the successors were the sons of the predecessors and proceed to construct the datings we get absurd results. Therefore we have to assume that there were some brothers who ruled successively. Such instances are also found in **Cheitharol Kumbaba** in the later period in serial number 51,52,53 and 54 beginning from **Pakhangba** as the first serial number. They were sons of **Garib Niwaz**. But we are at a loss to find out who were the brothers and how many spells were there in this set of 27 kings under our consideration. Most of our records keep mum and those found are also incoherent. As a guide we also allot longer ruling periods for those kings who are found having longer ruling periods in **Cheitharol Kumbaba**.

In the authentic part of the chronology of **Cheitharol Kumbaba** we find that **Chalamba** succeeded **Tangjamba** in 1545 A.D. But on further examination of other records it is found that **Chalamba** was neither the son nor the brother of **Tangjamba** who died at a tender age of 29 years only. **Chalamba** was a remote relative of **Tangjamba**. The relationship is not written in either of the texts **Cheitharol Kumbaba** and **Ningthourol Lambuba**. According to **Sagei Salairol** published by the State Kala Academi, both of them are found to be the descendants of **Thangbi Lanthaba**, through his wife **Yoiren Tompokpi** the famous **Moirang** princess born by the younger brother of the **Moirang** king **Chingkhu Telheiba**, from whose life sketch the famous historical novel *Moirang Thoibi* developed. Details may be seen in the section on **Khamba-Thoibi**.

The date of **Poireiton** is estimated to about 810 A.D. More details are discussed in the section on **Poireiton** and it is not

discussed here. Within the period from 810 A.D. to 980 A.D. i.e. from Poireiton to the last date of Luwang Punshiba there are 5 kings as found in the Sagei Salairol mentioned above. We therefore allot ruling periods in the way as discussed above.

Thus a chart of tentative dates beginning from 810 A.D. to 1467 A.D. is constructed as follows.

TENTATIVE DATES

1. Poireiton	...	810-850	A.D.
2. Tabung	...	850-890	..
3. Pangminaba	...	890-905	..
4. Khunthiba	...	905-930	..
5. Luwang Punshiba	...	930-980	..
1. Pakhangba	...	980-1020	..
2. Khuiyoi Tompek	...	1020-1055	..
3. Taothingmaung	...	1055-1075	..
4. Khui Ningomba	...	1075-1092	..
5. Pengshiba	...	1092-1115	..
6. Kaokhangba	...	1115-1133	..
7. Naokhamba	...	1133-1140	..
8. Naophangba	...	1140-1171	..
9. Sameirang	...	1171-1190	..
10. Ura Konthouba	...	1190-1215	..
11. Naothingkhong	...	1215-1250	..
12. Khongtekcha	...	1250-1260	..
13. Keirencha <sup>1</sup>	...	1271-1276	..
14. Yarba	...	1276-1278	..
15. Ayangba	...	1278-1281	..
16. Ningthoucheng	...	1281-1290	..
17. Chenglei Ipan Lanthaba	...	1290-1294	..
18. Yanglou Keiphaba	...	1294-1296	..
19. Irengba	...	1296-1310	..
20. Loiyumba	...	1310-1336	..

1. King who succeeded after interregnum.

21.	Loitongba	...	1336-1346	A.D.
22.	Aton Yoiremba	...	1346-1347	"
23.	Iwanthaba	...	1347-1353	"
24.	Thawanthaba	...	1353-1356	"
25.	Chingthang Lanthaba	...	1356-1358	"
26.	Thingbai Shelhongba	...	1358-1360	"
27.	Puranthaba	...	1360-1362	"
28.	Khumomba	...	1362-1370	"
29.	Moiramba	...	1370-1381	"
30.	Thangbi Lanthaba	...	1381-1391	"
31.	Kongyamba	...	1391-1398	"
32.	Telheiba	...	1398-1401	"
33.	Tonaba	...	1401-1403	"
34.	Tabungba	...	1403-1415	"
35.	Lairenba	...	1415-1419	"
36.	Punshiba <sup>1</sup>	...	1424-1437	"
37.	Ningthoukhomba	...	1437-1467	"
[ The dates from Kiyamba onwards are in good chronological orders The dates given against them are those recorded in Cheitharol Kumbaba. ]				
38.	Kiyamba	...	1467-1508	"
39.	Koiremba	...	1508-1512	"
40.	Lam Kiyamba	...	1512-1523	"
41.	Nongyinphaba	...	1523-1524	"
42.	Kambomba	...	1524-1542	"
43.	Tangjamba	...	1542-1545	"
44.	Challamba	...	1545-1562	"
45.	Mungyangba	...	1562-1597	"
46.	Khagemba	...	1597-1652	"
47.	Khunjaoba	...	1652-1666	"
48.	Paikhomba	...	1666-1697	"
49.	Chairairongba	...	1697-1709	"
50.	<del>Pamheiba</del> (Garib Niwaz)	...	1709-1748	"

King who succeeded after interregnum.

51. Chit Shah	...	1748-1752	A.D.
52. Bharat Shah	...	1752-1753	"
53. Maramba	...	1753-1759	"
54. Chingthangkhomba (Jaising)	—	1759-1762	"
55. Maramba	...	1762-1763	"
56. Chingthangkhomba (Jaising)	...	1763-1798	"
57. Labanyachandra	...	1798-1801	"
58. Madhuchandra	...	1801-1803	"
59. Chourjit	...	1803-1813	"
60. Marjit	...	1813-1819	"
61. Heraachandra	] Puppets rulers under the Burmese control.		
62. Yumjaotaba			
63. Ghambhir,			
64. Jaising			
65. Jadusing			
66. Raghav			
67. Bhadra			
68. Ghambhir Singh	... ..	1825-1834	"
69. Chandrakirti (Ningthem Pishak)	... →	1834-1844	"
70. Nara Singh	...	1844-1850	"
71. Debendra <sup>1</sup>	...	1850-1850	"
72. Chandrakirti	... →	1850-1886	"
73. Surochandra	...	1886-1890	(643)
74. Kulachandra	...	1890-1891	"

1890

1. Debendra reigned for some three months.

## THE MIGRATION IN GENERAL

Anthropologists divide human races inhabiting this planet into three major groups. Some anthropologists, however, divide them into four groups. They are the Caucasoid, Mongoloid, Negroid and Australoid. They further say that the human habitation started in three major zones of the earth. They were northern China, Central Asia and Central Africa.

According to them, population from the above stated areas started migration from one settlement to another since prehistoric days. The Australoid population of Malaya peninsula moved along the coast of Cambodia, Burma and as far as Bengal, and came to Central and South India. The Australoid population of India was thus originated. These groups of people were found to have inhabited the coastal lines of Bengal, Burma, Central and South India in the old days. However some anthropologists like Surkar, Mazumdar etc. consider the Indian Australoid as autochthones of India. Whatever the original homeland be, the Australoid population inhabited the above stated areas since pre-historic days besides the Dravidians. Therefore the base stratum of the Indian population was Dravidoid, Australoid and admixture of both.

The population inhabiting Burma, China, and Tibet including the sub-Himalayan regions was almost all Mongoloid origin. Different Mongoloid tribes mixed each other producing a mixed tribe which also belonged to the same Mongoloid race, and it will be seen in subsequent parts. The mixing of different Mongoloid tribes continued as late as the last century A.D.

The nature of people inhabiting the North-Eastern part of India is somewhat different from the rest of the country i.e. India. It is to be looked along with Southern and South-eastern Tibet, Burma, China and South-East Asia. The sub-Himalayan region as stated above was a virgin land. People living in these areas were



all migrated from one place or the other. The Mongoloid population from the eastern and southern Tibet particularly the sub-Himalayan regions came to India by successive waves from about the second millennium B C. They began to inhabit the foot hills of the Himalayas, the Gangetic plains of Bihar and northern Bengal and the Punjab plains. The precise route of their coming to India is not known but believed to be through the valley of the branches of the Kosi river in eastern Nepal, and along the course of the Indus river. These Himalayan or neo-Tibetan tribes established a Mongoloid empire in the above stated areas before the coming of the Aryans. But no concrete historical record of the existence of this Mongoloid empire is available till the coming of the Aryans. The Aryans recorded conflicts with these Mongoloid tribes. The name of kingdoms like Agra, Banga, Kalunga, etc. are believed to have originated from the name or the dialect of these Himalayan tribes. The original names of these kingdoms were most probably in their dialect Nga, Pa-Nga, Kali-Nga respectively. The Mongoloid word Nga ( ङ/ङ ) is usually pronounced by the Aryans Anga ( अङ्ग/अङ्ग ). In a similar manner Pa-Nga ( पङ्ग/पङ्ग ) and Kali-Nga ( कलिङ्ग/कलिङ्ग ) are pronounced as Banga ( बङ्ग/बङ्ग )<sup>1</sup> and Kalinga ( कलिङ्ग/कलिङ्ग ) respectively. In the first millennium B C several kingdoms like

1 Dr. N. N. Choudhury connects the origin of Banga with the Tibetan word bong meaning marshy or moist. Jnanendra Mohan Das connects it with Santali bong, a spirit. This is perhaps from the view that the Santali people are supposed to be the earliest inhabitants of Bengal. B. Kakati links it with Austric formations like bong, le bong, nambong, boang etc. in which bong has a reference to some sort of physical depression or cavity and further feels that the word may be looked upon as depressed or waterlogged condition of the region. 'bong' means a natural spring or a channel in a cultivated field in Assamese. He also further connects Anga and Kalinga with Austric formations like ang meaning to gape and kling or llong respectively.

In my opinion the earliest inhabitants of these regions were the Himalayan Mongoloids who were tall, fair or yellowish complexioned and brachycephalic Mongoloids before the wave of Dravidoids, Negritos, Austro-Asiatics and other Tibeto-Burmans. These Himalayan tribes

Kapilavastu, Khosala, etc were found to have been ruled by the Sakyas belonging to these Himalayan tribes whose earlier home

appear to have spread from Kabul, Kandahar all along the foot hills of the Himalayas to Bihar and Orissa. All these Himalayan tribes are believed to be the Sakyas and their cognate tribes. The dialect of these Himalayan tribes got mixed with the dialect of the incoming Aryans with the formation of the new speech called the Vedic language. Thus the Vedic language is therefore a mixed language of the new Aryans and the Himalayan Mongoloids. Hence words belonging to these Himalayan Mongoloids do not represent a foreign in Sanskrit and appear to be Sanskrit root words in later period. In Jain traditions it is stated that the inhabitants of Ladha (Western Bengal) were barbarous and cruel, people commanded their dogs with the command word 'ch chhu to bite at Mahavir Jain when the letter passed through that country ch chhu is a word of the Himalayan Mongoloid and not of Austro Asiatic origin. The Negroes and Austro Asiatic people seem to have come to these regions in the closing part of the first millennium before Christ and beginning of the Christian era, perhaps after the Dravidoids. When all the dialects became mixed waves of people of Indo Aryan or rather Mongolo Aryan speech arrived, the earlier people adopted the new speech with words of the earlier dialects and in the 10th and 11th century A.D. vernaculars began to develop. So when we examine Sanskrit and other Indo Aryan languages we can detect words of Austro Asiatic origin from the fact that the speech of this group of people are still spoken in some parts of the world but not with the words of the Himalayan Mongoloids which became inconspicuous and moreover the traditions of that Himalayan Mongoloids have lost their independent identity. These Himalayan tribes who moved towards the north became Tibetans, those in the Gangetic plains became Indo Aryans and those who moved towards the east in Burma and elsewhere got mixed with other Asiatic, Tai and other Tibeto Burman and became sub Mongoloid races. Thus there is no sample of that Himalayan Mongoloid words under our consideration except few scattered words here and there. Of the scattered words some of them are found in obsolete Manipuri and possibly in the dialects of Tangkhul and Ao in eastern region. The presence of archaic Vedic words in obsolete Manipuri has given serious speculations among the scholars. Different theories have been postulated as to how such old and obsolete Sanskrit words are found in obsolete Manipuri. One inherent defect is that most of the early scholars had a firm conviction that Sanskrit was the supreme language and from which others language borrowed. Thus they firmly believe that at a period in pre historic days long before Christ Aryans must have passed through this valley. The Aryan elements

was at Sakyas in Southern Tibet. The name *Sakya* itself is an Aryanised form of the *Chakkha*. The Sakyas who settled in India

among the Meitais and Tangkhuls as observed by the British scholars is claimed were the products of these Aryan waves

In Manipur accounts like Poreiton Kunthok we find words like Pa-ma and Nu ma meaning boy and girl respectively said to be of Chakkhan (Sakayan) origin. The word Pa-ma and Pa nga are in similar formations. Hence it is most probable that the word Banga is derived from the Himalayan Mongoloid word Pa nga. Moreover the maximum Austric impact may be attributed to about the 10th century A D

See also B K Barua A cultural history of Assam, Vol 1, page 235 and History of Bengal, Vol 1 edited by R C Mazumdar, page-36

There has been such speculations about the dispersal of a race of people supposed to be the Alpine race into the Indian sub continent before the advent of the Vedic Aryans. Some scholars fool them to be the Aryans more or less allied to the Iranians, but Vedic literature speaks of them to be the Viatyas. Before their entry into the Indian sub continent they are supposed to have inhabited in the Pamir plateau and from where they dispersed towards the Indian sub continent by two streams, one to the Punjab plains and the other towards the Himalayas and settled near the Manasaravar lake. "The Nagars associated with the worship of Hataka Siva are said to have lived originally near the Manasa lake to the east of Kangra and Kasmira and then migrated to Nagarkot and westward to Kasmira and spread subsequently over other parts of India. This view is supported by other writers" (See P C Choudhury History of civilisation of Assam, page 106 107)

The Punjab stream established the cities of Mohenjodaro and Harappa after mixing with the earlier inhabitants possibly the Pre Dravidoids before the arrival of the Aryans from the north-west. The excavations of Mohenjodaro and Harappa do not show the presence of Aryans, but the skulls which are of Mongoloid stature are found. So, this Alpine race that entered India before the Vedic Aryans were neither pure Aryan nor pure Mongoloid, however there is no impossibility of their mixing in their primeval home. This race of people were later represented by the Chakkhas (Sakyas) and their major cognate tribes and clans like Yakkha, Yu-chakkha, Yu chi, Yuoh-chi etc. clans like Kali (Kalita), Mora etc, sub-clans like Pa, Ma, Su, Nga (Anga), Lei, Hou, Khu etc and their mixed sub-clans like Pa-Nga (Banga), Mora-Nga (Moranga), Su nga (Sunga), Kali Nga (Kalanga) etc. It seems from these mixed sub-clan formations that Assamese and Oriya speech formations should have

got mixed with the Aryans, while those who continued to live in the sub-Himalayas remained as Mongoloid. Some Sakiyan kings

more similarities than that of the Bengali severally since Kali (Kalita) is the Indo Aryan speech progenitor of Assam where as Oriya is the mixture of Kah (Kalita) and Nga (Anga) For more details of Kalita see the section on Pre Aryan Mongoloid and their culture There is lack of scientific evidences for the dispersal of this race of people to European continent as far as Norway and Germany and the Indian sub continent except literary sources of which the Manipuri accounts which have so far been twisted with myths and remained unveiled to this date may be mentioned The Manipuri accounts too do not mention their primeval home but some basic words of the Chakhas as recorded in the Manipuri accounts are also found in the old dialects of the people of the above mentioned areas We find in Manipuri accounts words of Chakhan origins which are now in most cases obsolete like chuma (my friend), chitma (salt), naowa (young or new), from which the Sanskrit word nava derived The Old Anglo-Saxon word for it is neowa 1 juwa (my lord younger, from which the Sanskrit word yuva derived) The Chakhan suffix ton is equivalent to the Sanskrit suffix tan and English suffix ton More details may be seen in the section on Meiteilon or Manipuri language and on Pre Aryan Mongoloids and their culture

As we have no name of this race of people when they inhabited in the Himalayas and sub-Himalayas they are termed as the 'Himalayan Mongoloid' and this name is used through out this book

Pa of Pa Nga (Banga) seems to be cognate tribe of the Bolo The original name of the Bodo is Ma, the details may be seen in the section on Mayang These tribes with mono syllabic names were of sub Himalayan tribes Besides Pa and Ma we also get names like Su, Loi, Khu etc.

The primeval home of the Bodos is supposed to be the Upper Howang Ho, from where they moved towards the south west and settled in the south-eastern Himalayas before entering into the Indian territory There is a tendency of most of the migrating tribes pushing in the forward direction but not retreating their old route or habitation The Bodos from the southern Himalayas moved to the river valleys of the Biahmaputra river in the closing part of the 8th century A.D., as far as Koch Behar and Garo hills to the west, and as far as Cachar and Tipura to the south west. The Bodos must have arrived in the southern Himalayas or were in that region after the birth of Lhasa in the 7th century A.D. The Tibetans called the southern Himalayas Bod or Pot meaning land of the snows and whence the name of Podo derived. The

migrated to Burma in the second century B.C.<sup>2</sup> and established a kingdom at a place which is now known as Kabow valley proper in the upper Chindwin valley. Thus the political nucleus of the ancient kingdom of Manipur came into existence for the first time in human history. More details may be seen in subsequent sections.

A linguistic group of the Caucasoid race, known as Aryan, migrated to India at about the middle of the second millennium before Christ. It may be noted that different scholars give different dates of the arrival of the Aryans. The Aryans first settled in the Punjab plains and then in the upper Gangetic plains and established the country called *Aryabarta* by absorbing the earlier settlers. Later they expanded their kingdom mainly down the Gangetic plains upto Bengal and Orissa. In expanding their territory they had conflicts with the earlier settlers. The Aryans not only expanded their territory but also expanded their cultural influence to other non-Aryan tribes. The process of expansion both culturally and politically is known as Aryanisation. The legends of the epic Mahabharata give a wide coverage on Aryanisation.

In the process of Aryanisation, the Aryans married non-Aryan wives. Thus not only culturally but also ethnically the earlier

time of their arrival in the sub-Himalayan region is believed to be in the early Christian era. It may be noted that their seemingly cognate tribe Pa arrived in the Indian plains by a different route much earlier than the Bodo. The Mon too are supposed to be akin to Bodo, whose ancestral home was also the Upper Howang Ho and probably the next immigrants arriving the eastern Himalayas by about the 6th century A.D. Some Mons who moved as far south as Thaton in lower Burma and settled there from about the 2nd century A.D. People of Mon origin who settled in the south-eastern lower Himalayas were referred to as Mon pa by the Tibetans in the 7th and 8th century A.D. In these areas some of these people of Mon origin got mixed with the Himalayan Mongoloids arriving from the western Himalayas resulting in the mixed tribes like Ma Hou, Ma Ngang, Khu-Man, Pa-Nga etc. where Hou, Ngang, Khu, Nga are Himalayan Mongoloids. Man are of Mon origin and Ma the original name of Bodo. Hence Pa-Nga is a mixed stock of a cognate tribe of Bodo and Nga.

2. In the Burmese chronicle, Glass Palace Chronicle, the date is given as 923 B.C. which is much exaggerated.

settlers became mixed with the Aryans. Even the grandmother of Krishna the Jadava is described to be a woman belonging to a Mongoloid race. Satyabati the second queen of Shanta-nu and the grandmother of the Pandavas and the Kouravas, was possibly a Dravidian or an Australoid. Shanta-nu himself could have been a Mongoloid prince given the Kshetriya status in course of Aryanisation. King Jarasandha was also possibly a Mongoloid king who had alliance with different Mongoloid princes. The epic depicts the Mongoloid kings to be very cruel possibly from the Aryan angle. Saharsarjuna a non-Aryan prince is described to have butchered several Aryan. He did not spare even the ascetics who renounced the world. It is said that he had severely beaten an Aryan ascetic named Parasar Muni. As a result of it one leg of the Muni was broken. The injured Muni was picked up by Matsyagandha and her parents who lived in a river island. They attended the Muni where he recovered. While in the house of Matsyagandha the Muni co-habited with her. She bore a child to the Muni whom they gave the name Vyasa, who was the author of the Mahabharata. The Muni left them and after some time Matsyagandha got married to king Shanta-nu, a divorcee, and assumed the name Satyabati. It is quite clear from the above text the social taboos of marriage and bridehood as found in the later period did not exist in the earlier period of Aryanisation. Gradually the Aryans at a later period began to look down upon the other tribes as inferior race when Aryanisation of principal Mongoloid kingdoms was completed. They branded the non-Aryan tribes as Sudras the lowest caste or stratum of human species. The Sudra princes of high calibre were however raised to the status of the upgraded Kshetriyas. The four-tier system of caste has been operating for more than two thousand years in the Aryanised society which later became known as the Hindu society.

In course of time all petty kingdoms of other tribes fell into the hands of the Aryans and consequently the whole of northern India became Aryanised. It is claimed that Aryanisation of Bengal was completed by about 400 A.D. The wave of Aryanisation came

upto Kamarupa in Assam. A dynasty in Kamarupa was established at about 400 A.D. by Puyavraman,<sup>3</sup> an Aryanised Mongoloid. It appears the wave did not farther penetrate into Upper Assam. The wave of Aryanisation of Bengal also did not move farther east to the Surma valley. However the *Arya Dharma* i.e. the Aryan religion penetrated. Thus it is seen that the highest concentration of Aryan elements are in the Punjab and Upper Gangetic plains and with diminishing quantum towards Bihar, Bengal and Orissa. According to H. Risely, the population of Bengal is an admixture of Dravidoid and Mongoloid with stains of Indo-Aryan. However Risely's view is not accepted by some scholars.

The tribes like the Bodos are believed to be an eastern Himalayan Tibeto-Burman tribe who migrated towards the south-west in the Brahmaputra valley. The precise time of their coming to the Brahmaputra valley is not known, but believed to be at about the 8th century A.D. Of these Mongoloid tribes the Koeh a clan of the Bodos got mixed with the oceanic elements from Indian plains. The Bodos were found in Upper Assam near Sibasagar till the coming of the Pongs ( Mau Shans ) in the early 13th century A.D. The Bodos in Upper Assam got possibly mixed with some Austro-Asiatic elements who entered India in the 10th or 11th century A.D. They were gradually pushed westward by the Mau Shans and they finally settled in the North Cachar hills and Cachar where these group of Bodos became known as Kacharis. The Bodos who farther moved towards the south to Tripura at the beginning of the 16th century A.D. became known as Tripuris.

The Khasi-Jayantiya tribes are found to their present habitat in Meghalaya in the 16th century A.D. Before coming to their present habitat, they were inhabitants of Cambodia now called Thailand. They belonged to the Funan-Mon-Khmer tribes. They fled towards north-west from their homeland and settled on the western part of present Manipur in the 11th century A.D. They

3. P.C. Choudhury : History of Civilization of Assam, page-133 and see also Gait's History of Assam.

continued to stay in that area for more than three centuries till they were subjected under pressure from other tribes particularly Tibeto-Burmans. They were gradually forced to move north-west at North-Cachar hills and further subjected under the pressure of the Bodos who were later known as Kacharis to move to the west. Thus the Khasi-Jayantiya tribes moved to their present habitat in Meghalaya. More details may be seen in the section on Funan, Maring, Mon Khmer.

The Funans belonged to a group of Australoids coming from the East-Indies. The precise time of their coming to Cambodia is not known but they were found there i.e. in Cambodia in the 1st century A.D. Mons and its cognate tribe Marings belonged to the Asiatic tribes whose ancestral home was in the Howang-Ho valley. They migrated towards the south along the Salween river and settled in the coastal areas of Burma. Mons are believed to be the first immigrants arriving Burma. They are believed to have occupied that area before the formation of the Chinese nationality. The Khmers are also believed to be of Asiatic who migrated to Cambodia in pre historic days. The Funan kingdom of Cambodia in the 1st century A.D. is said to have expanded to the west to the coastal areas of Burma and as far as Bay of Bengal.

In early Christian Era, Northern Burma and South eastern Tibet was an area inhabited by tribes of Tibetan origin and tribes of the ancient Teru state of Southern China. The Teru state was later known as the Karen State because of the supremacy of the Karens<sup>4</sup>. In the state of Teru there were different tribes of Asiatic origin like King, Kang, Kong, Kou, Kachin, Karen, Kapow, etc. besides tribes of Tai origin. One of the most important elements of the state of Karen was the Pang<sup>5</sup> a Tai tribe. The Manipur account Ponetton Kunthok mentions this tribe. It is said that King Thongarun was invited to become king in the land of Tai Pang where the *Tai-Pang mi* meaning 'Tai-Pang people' inhabited Pang.

4 Dr Gogoi. The Tai and the Tai kingdoms, page 27

5 *ibid.* page-26.



is also called Pan-hu according to the name of their founder Pan-hu. The Pangs themselves called Ngao or Yao meaning powerful. Originally the Pangs were the ruling race of the state of Ch'u the rival state of Ch'in before the formation of the Chinese nationality. The most mixed tribes inhabited the above stated areas. All these mixed tribes were put under one category known as Tibeto-Burman. Those tribes who were more Asiatic than the Tibetans or the Himalayans, are classic Tibeto-Burmans. While those tribes who are more Tibetan or Himalayan may be called neo-Tibetans. On the other hand those tribes who are more of Tai than Tibetan or Asiatic may be grouped as neo-Burmese and Shan-Barma in specific cases. The dialect of these tribes are known as Tibeto-Burman of the Sino-Tibetan language family. The Tibeto-Burman language became fully characterised at about the 7th century A.D.<sup>6</sup> It may be mentioned here that the ancestral home of the Tibetans was on the upper reaches of the Howang-Ho or Yellow river of China from where they moved westward and settled in Tibet. The precise time of their arrival in Tibet is not known. Racially there is Turkish element in the Tibetan.<sup>7</sup>

Besides these Tibeto-Burmans there was another tribe known as Pyu who occupied central Burma to the south-east of Kabow valley. It is not definitely known whether the Pyu tribe was a Tibetan or Tibeto-Burman or any other sub-Himalayan tribe who came through India. Different scholars give different views and opinions. However it is more likely that the Pyu was a sub-Himalayan tribe who came to Burma at a period of about 200 B.C. to 250 A.D. through Arakan.

The Chinese called Tai 'barbarians'.<sup>8</sup> There are scores of Tai tribes or names. Of the Tai tribes NgaiLao, ShenLao, Loi, Lai, Khunjan, Nung or Lungjen etc. are of importance in the history of Manipur. The impact of NgaiLao racially or culturally or both on the people of Manipur is great. The NgaiLao legend of Temou

6. Dr. S.K. Chatterjee : *History of Bengali language*, Vol. 1.

7. Dr. Gogoi : *The Tai and the Tai kingdoms*, page-28.

8. *ibid.*, page-37.

having nine sons, each becoming progenitors of different tribes is also seen in the Manipur legends of king Kang-ba having nine sons,<sup>9</sup> each becoming progenitors of different tribes. The period of this NgaiLao legend is estimated to be not earlier than the coming of Buddhism. Besides Manipuri words and names like Tom-chou, Samu-ngou, Ta-chou I-mou etc we find in NgaiLao names like Tong-chou, Sang-ngou, I-chou, I-mou, Te-mou etc. The title Ko-lo-feng<sup>10</sup> a Chinese corrupt form of Khun-Luwang-Fuug meaning 'Lord Luwang the Glorious' adopted by the NgaiLao is also found to have been used by the descendants of Poiraiton beginning from his fourth descendant Luwang Punshiba. He was also called Luwang Ningthou Punshiba meaning 'Lord Luwang the Longlived'. The title Luwang is perhaps borrowed by the Tai from the Sakya. More details may be seen in subsequent sections.

The migration and cross movement of Tai population is a vast topic but most of the Tai tribes moved towards the south from their ancestral home which is believed to be the valley of the Hwang-Ho and settled in the Indo-China peninsula and Yun-nan. The major movement of the Tai started from the 3rd century B.C. when the Chinese Emperor Shih-Wang-Shi (219-210 B.C.)<sup>11</sup> uprooted and expelled them. The western part of Yun-nan is believed to have been occupied mainly by the Chinese and other Asiatic tribes like Chin, Karen etc. before being dispersed to other parts. These mixed tribes which included some Tai elements possibly were called Khe by the Shans, and Keke by the Manipuris. These Khe or Keke (Kege in modern pronunciation) moved probably in the later part of the 8th century A.D. to the ancient Kingdom of Manipur and settled in the area now known as Kabow Valley proper and became the subjects of the Moriya kings there. More details may be seen in the section on Kege, Senbi-Kabow.

9. The name of the nine sons of Temou are, (1) Tai Ya, (2) Tibetan, (3) Chinese, (4) Man, (5) Ngai Lao, (6) Cylonesse, (7) Annamite, (8) Pai-tsu, (9) Pai Yi. See also *The Tai and the Tai kingdoms*: Dr. Gogoi.

10. Dr. Gogoi: *The Tai and the Tai kingdoms*, page-64.

11. *ibid.*, page 37.

In Yun-nan the Tai flourished and in the 8th century A.D. the Nan Chao empire developed. The home of the Tibeto-Burmans as discussed above was politically calm before the attack of Ko-lo-feng the Nan Chao king who ascended the throne in the year 748 A.D. Ko-lo-feng defeated the Tibetan forces by promoting friendship with China who was a foe of the Tibetans by that period. However a disagreement soon ensued between Nan Chao and China. Then a clash followed in which Ko-lo-feng killed several Chinese. Sensing a danger Ko-lo-feng sought peace and friendship with Tibet at a time when the Tibetans were preparing to revenge the Chinese for the humiliation they suffered in the hands of the latter in the year 747 A.D. Tibet accepted the proposal and became friends with the Nan Chao empire. The Chinese took a persuasive policy towards Nan Chao in order to bring Ko-lo-feng under their heels. In the meantime Ko-lo-feng expanded his territory by conquering different countries including Pyu the next door neighbour of the ancient kingdom of Manipur. But Ko-lo-feng never entered or conquered any part of the ancient kingdom of Manipur including Inphial Valley as some historians like Mr W. Shaw<sup>12</sup> who based his deductions on the forged dates of the Manipur chronicle, Cheitharol Kumbaba, said Manipur was conquered by the Thai and Dr Gogoi who based on Mr. W. Shaw believed Manipur was defeated by Ko-lo-feng. He possibly penetrated upto Kamarupa in Assam through some eastern parts of Assam. The appeasing policy of the Chinese having being failed, the Chinese sent a strong force to crush Ko-lo-feng, but they got one of the worst reverses. When Ko-lo-feng died in the year 778 A. D he was succeeded by his grandson I-mou-shun. With a combined force of Tibet and Nan Chao, I-mou-shun invaded the Chinese territory but he was repulsed. I-mou-shun started negotiation for peace and friendship on the advice of a wise minister for the security of his kingdom. Tibet was not happy and tried to dissuade I-mou-shun from the course but failed. The policy of I-mou-shun aroused

12 *ibid.*, page-67 foot note.

great suspicion in the minds of the Tibetans and soon they came into blows. The Tibetans started waging war against Nan Chao in the year 795 A.D. Since then there had been protracted war between Tibet and Nan Chao. In this war I-mou-shun took sixteen Tibetan cities into possession. Sometime in the beginning of the 9th century A.D. the Tibetan forces were very badly defeated. It is said that several thousand hands of the Tibetans were cut<sup>13</sup>. I-mou-shun also captured five Tibetan princes and sent them to Imperial China as prisoners. I-mou-shun died in the year 809 A.D. This was the political condition at the beginning of the 9th century A.D. in the home of the Tibeto-Burmans.

Among the sixteen cities occupied by I-mou-shun, Putao in northern Burma was also included. Prior to its capture by Nan Chao it was ruled by the Tibetan princes. 'Putao is a plain district of Kamti-long. This area was earlier under the rule of Tibetan Princes but later occupied by the Shans. This change might have been one of the effects of Ko lo-feng's victory over the Tibetans. It is said that there were as many as sixteen thousand villages in the plain. The local inhabitants were people whom the Shans called Kang, Langkhai, Nokyo, Yoya, Tawhwang'<sup>14</sup>. On the south-eastern side the Khu-man also called Khu-nung Khuman inhabited before coming of the Shans. Later some of the Khu-nung Khumans moved to upper Assam where they were known as Mismis. Some of the Khu-nung Khu-mans came to Imphal Valley along with Poireiton which will be seen in subsequent sections. On the north west of Putao was Kangla of Kham-nung Sawa of the Manipuri accounts. The present Kangla is located at 97°E and 29°14'N. It is not definitely known whether this Kangla was in existence from the period under consideration or the inhabitants of Kangla of that period moved to the site of present Kangla. In addition to the above mentioned tribes there were Langmai, Nongmai, Nongyai, Nongbal etc. belonging to the Tibeto-Burmans. Other tribes who

13. *ibid.*, page-79.

14. *ibid.*, page-159 foot note

may also be called Tibeto-Burmans like Mo'an, Moirang, Mayang, Mangang, Thongnang etc. occupied the area before the coming of the Tai (Mau Shan).

The political conditions forced the people to leave their homes for some other safer places. Thus these Tibeto-Burmans began to move towards the west and the south-west in the beginning of the 9th century A D. and entered Imphal valley by successive waves.

## THE MIGRATION OF RACES TO IMPHAL VALLEY

The Tibeto-Burmans who inhabited in the home of the Tibeto-Burmans as discussed in earlier sections started migrating from their habitat towards the west and south-west in the closing part of the 8th century A. D. and the beginning of the 9th century A. D. There is no record of movement of these Tibeto-Burman tribes except that of Poireiton as seen from the literary account Poireiton Khunthok Date is not mentioned in that account. The optimum period of human settlement in Imphal valley as estimated in the section on Population Hypothesis is about the 8th century A.D. Moreover the estimated date of Poireiton which will be seen in the section on Poireiton is c. 810 A D The dialect of the tribes like Chenglei, Shelloy-Langmai, Kangba, Kongba, Kouba etc. are clearly seen to be Tibeto-Burman dialects as found in the literary accounts of Manipur which are discussed in other sections The Tibeto-Burman dialects became fully characterised, rather were born at about the 7th century A.D. and at the same time the above stated tribes are said to be the earliest settlers of Imphal Valley as found in the different accounts and traditions. So, from the analysis, it is clearly seen that these Tibeto-Burman tribes migrated and settled in the Imphal Valley at about 800 A D as against the claims of some scholars who herald it to be in the second millenium before Christ.

It is believed that these tribes arrived in streams and settled on Imphal Valley within a very short time. They settled on the northern part of the valley somewhere near the source of a stream which was still awaiting a name to be given. The Kong(ba) tribe settled there and since then the name of the stream became known as the Kongba river. The tribes of Asiatic origin like Kang(ba), Kou(ba), and Kong(ba) settled there while the Shelloy-Langmais

settled on the hill west of the Kongba river. The hill became known as Langmai hills. Now the name of that hill is called the Mapao hills. The Chengleis settled near the Kanglatongbi plateau, probably to the south-west of it. They were followed by other tribes like Heirong, Hangoi, Ngangoi, Kharoi etc. By about 810 A.D. a horde of immigrants headed by prince Poireiton belonging to a sub-Himalayan tribe Sakya which the Manipuri accounts write *Chakka* arrived. They settled on the south of the plateau which they gave the name Kangla, later Kangla-tongbi. Thus the second political nucleus of the ancient kingdom of Manipur came into existence. Tribes like Leihou, Mahou, Nongbal, Nongmai, Haokap Chingsang, Khunpham, Ngangcheng, Heirem, Khunjan etc. then followed.

In the 11th century A. D. tribes like Funan, Maring, Mon-Khmer arrived. At the same time the Moriyans shifted their capital towards the southern part of Imphal Valley. Moriya Phambal Raja (Moriya Phambal-la-cha) was possibly the king of Moriya by that period. His subjects were mainly the tribe which was called Keke by the Tibeto-Burmans and Khe by the Shans. Racially they appear to be an admixture of Chin and Tai, and were inhabitants of Yun-nan. With the shifting of Moriya capital, the earlier capital of Moriya valley became gradually settled by an Asiatic origin Tibeto-Burman tribe named Kabow. Since then the Moriya valley became known as Kabow valley proper. The Kabow became mixed with a Tai tribe known as Senbu who were of Siamese Tai. By about the same time the Tai inhabitants on the eastern boundary of the Angko Ching began to move towards Imphal valley. They belonged to Loi a Tai tribe.

At about the early part of the 13th century, A. D. Bangals, proto-Bangals, Tibeto-Burmans and neo-Burmese tribes arrived. The Bangal chief was probably a Sena chief of Rangal. Prior to the coming of these tribes a horde of Shan invaders came and stayed for some years in the northern part of Imphal valley and left along the source of the Iril river. In the second half of the 13th century A.D. a Tibeto-Burman tribe called Moirang with Lai chiefs

arrived. Then followed other Tibeto-Burman tribes like Kabui, Khuyon etc. From about the middle of the 15th century A.D. small waves of Indo-Aryan Brahmins began to arrive. In the beginning of the 17th century A.D. Indo-Afghan Mussalmans arrived. Now we will discuss them in detail.



## THE KOUBA, KANGBA AND KONGBA

We find a very small tribe known as Kouba, whose references are found in literary accounts. One prominent person belonging to this tribe was Kouba(ru) who is said to have a son named Kouba Angangnga. It is believed that the Kouba tribe arrived on this land a little earlier than 800 A.D. and settled somewhere in the Upper course of a river now known as the Kongba river. After staying there for more than a century and a half the tribe wanted to shift their settlement to some better places. While Kouba tribe was doing so, that is, selecting a better habitable table land, Nongta (Pakhangba) met them and objected to their plan. Literary sources like Ningthourol Lambuba narrates the episode in the form of fable. It states that the event took place in the first millenium when Pakhangba was known as Lolang Pakhangba or Lei-nung lonja Pakhangba. It appears there was a quarrel over that issue even though the literary account does not comment further. The Kouba tribe who quarrelled with Nongta was Kouba Angangnga said to be the son of Kouba-ru<sup>1</sup>.

There is no impossibility of the name Kouba-ru deriving from the name of the source of a stream which was on that hill when the Kouba tribe settled, to which the name Kouba river was given from its association with the Kouba tribe and in due course the course of the stream was either changed or disappeared. The imaginary ancestor of the Kouba known as Koubaren seems to be a later innovation by the people of Kouba origin when the culture of ancestor worship of the Lai tribes became active. More details may be seen in the subsequent sections.

The site where the quarrel ensued became known as Phatlou Laimakol<sup>2</sup>. It seems the correct spelling for *Laimakol* is *Leimakol*. The literary account does not give a pin point location of Phatlou

1. Ningthourol Lambuba, edited by O. Bhogswai Singh, page-7.

2. Ibid, page-7.

dialect which has a close affinity with those of the Karens of Burma. Major tribes of this state of the Karens are traceable but the smaller ones are now extinct. It is most likely that the extinct tribes like Kang, Kong, Kou, etc. belonged to the people of this Karen state.

These tribes namely Kang, Kong, Kou, etc. were found to have inhabited the northernmost part of the Imphal Valley, and they were probably the earliest known inhabitants of Manipur plateau. When they arrived on this land, it appears their dialects were fully characterised Tibeto-Burman and found to have already been influenced by other Tibeto-Burmans. They had adopted the classic Tibeto-Burman suffix '-ba'. Thus we find the names with the suffix -ba as Kang-ba, Kou-ba, Kong-ba. Manipuri accounts show that the Kangba tribe got amalgamated with the Nongbals who later changed their name to Angom. Again the Kouba tribe got amalgamated with the Keges a Chin origin with Tai elements coming from Yun-nan. As regards Kongba as stated earlier it is not found in any literary source of Manipur except the name of a river which begins to flow from a place to where these tribes are supposed to have settled. One peculiarity of these tribes, is that most of their names begin with the sound 'K'. The names of persons of Kouba tribe are found to have ended by '-ru' i.e. Kouba-ru like Teru, Chiru etc. The Manipuri accounts refer to one chief of Kangba, he was chiefly used to be called Kangba by the tribe's name as was common in the early days. His real name is not found in any text. The Kangba tribe is believed to be the most numerous among the three tribes mentioned above. Some Kangbas settled in Putao in northern Burma. They were known as Kang tribe by the Shans without the Tibeto-Burman suffix '-ba'. They were still found occupying the area when the Pongs became active in the 13th century A.D. in that area. Those Tibeto-Burman tribes inhabiting that area were Kang, Langkhai, Nokyo, Yowa, and Tawhang<sup>s</sup> according to the Pong chronicle, and they seem to have settled in that area after the invasion of Ko-leng-feng in the 8th century A.D.

5. *Ibid.*, page-159 foot note

In the Manipuri account, Poireiton Khunthok it is mentioned in an allegorical way that there was a land known as Tai-Pang-pan<sup>6</sup>. The last part of the word i.e. 'pan' is an old language meaning 'to live'. Here it is used in past participle form. Thus Tai-Pang-pan may be interpreted to mean 'the land where the Tai Pang lived'. The implication of the story indicates that some people possibly from Putao who were of Tai Pang origin wanted to be the subjects of Thongaren, requested the latter to move to Tai-Pang-pan and rule them. In the text of the above mentioned account the mole replied that he was a Tai-Pang-nu meaning 'Tai Pang people' when Thongaren enquired about his identity. The reference of Tai Pang in Poireiton Khunthok seems to be this group of people. In that case they were of Tai origin but substantially altered to a classic Tibeto-Burman when they arrived in Imphal plateau. But their cognate tribe like the King tribe does not suggest them to be of Tai origin. Hence we conclude that Kongba, Kangba and Kouba were some Asiatic tribes who inhabited in the state of Teru along with King, Kihlou, Karen, Kachiu, Kapaw, Kapui etc.

6. Poireiton Khunthok, published by the Manipuri Sahitya Parishad page-5.

## THE CHENGLEI

Who were the Chengleis ? Different literary sources and traditions say that the earliest human settlement on the Imphal Valley and its foothills was on the foothills of the hill now known as the Koubru hill. Some accounts even have gone saying the settlement was on the top of Koubru hill. It is for this reason in some literary accounts a passage runs as '*Koubru khunda ahanba*' meaning 'Koubru-settlement-first'. Later investigations do not agree with it and it will be seen in subsequent sections. However there is every reason to believe that the Chenglei was one of the earliest settlers in Imphal valley. There is no concrete evidence of it except depending on literary sources in the absence of archeological evidences. It is believed that the Chengleis first settled on the foothills of the hill before it assumed the name Koubru. Later they shifted towards the east. Kouba tribe was perhaps the first settler on Koubru hill comparatively later. The name of the hill is derived from the name of Kouba tribe as discussed in the section on Kangba, Kongba and Kouba.

Literary accounts so far available with us do not refer to the dialect of the Chengleis except when they had contact with other tribes particularly the Man of Khu-Man (Khu-man). However we come across names of persons belonging to the Chenglei tribe like Thangyi Khongjomba, Chingjen Naral Pangganba, Toubung Khongdoiba etc. These names are found to have been associated with suffix *-ba* of the Tibeto-Burman origin. Thangyi is believed to be a Chenglei clan, who had association with Thangnga and Kampong clans belonging to the Man. Literary accounts casually refer to the dialects of Thangnga and Kampong. In the dialects of Thangnga and Kampong, they called Nung (stone) *Khel*, Moithap ( a piece of dressed cotton ready for spinning) *Moireng*, Numit (sun) *Tumit*, Thokpa (to rise) *Pallaba*. The dialects of Thangyi or Chenglei appear to be closely akin to that of the Thangnga and Kampong as suggested

by their associations since similarity or strong affinity of language was a binding force in early days. The above names and words clearly indicate their dialect belonged to a Tibeto-Burman family.

Literary accounts have the characteristics of writing a word of a tribe in the following manner : "*Mayim Shelloy-na mikouna Lanqmai-na tengthanabadi, maibabudi moiba-O, maibibudi moibi-O, achumbabudi ateba-O kouye*".<sup>1</sup> This is an indication that the Shelloy and Langmai tribes were an amalgamated one. In a similar manner, when Hongnem, the Luwang king, while rowing a boat with the collected bones of his elder brother Pudangkhu Khutkoiba who possibly died in an engagement sometime earlier, found the bones floating inside the boat following a heavy downpour of rain. Since then the stream was named '*Adunonggibu Chenglei Nawang-Yi*, (in some manuscripts as Luwang-Yi) *Kampong Nawang-Yi-O townu kouye*'. The literal meaning of the passage is, 'Since that day the river became known as the Chenglei Nawang Yi and Kampong Nawang Yi. It may be noted that the name Nawang Yi was generally given to the upper course of this river by the Poireis when their scalings were confined to the northern part of the valley where as the name Nambul was given to its lower course by the Lai tribes who were of Tai origin at a latter period which will be seen in subsequent sections. Owing to the changes in the hydrography of the valley during the last ten centuries the upper course of this river i.e. the Nawang Yi is now reduced to a partially dried up rivulet rendered unfit for deploying canoes. The above text indicates that the Chengleis and the Kampongs were an amalgamated tribe like Kege-Moirang, Senbi-Kabow, Heirem-Khunjal etc.

It may be mentioned here that the clan name Thangnga is also found among the Marings of to-day to have been used in the same sense, that is, as one of their clans. It may also be noted that the same sounding word among the different dialects of the Mongoloids has separate meanings in the different dialects e. g., *Khun* in

1. Ningthourol Lambuba, edited by O. Bhogeswar Singh. page-12.

2. *ibid.*, page-61.

Meiteilon (Manipuri language) means 'village' and in the Pong (Mau Shan) dialect it means 'prince'. But in the case of the clan name Thangnga it is found to have been used in the same sense and meaning by the two tribes. The Marings belonged to a group of people called Man whose dialect was of Mon origin mixed with Tai and other dialects

Besides, the Chengleis had intermarriages with the Shelloy-Langmai a Tibeto-Burman tribe from about the 10th century A.D. The datings are discussed in subsequent sections. In the literary account Ningthourol Lambuba it is mentioned that one *moibi* (female priest) who could foretell things, named Ato-Moikoi-nu<sup>3</sup> of the Shelloy-Langmai cautioned some of their youths to abandon their plan for rendezvous with the Chenglei girls as she had foreseen a danger in her dream in which half of the Langmai hills cracked and rolled down. In another occasion one Shelloy-Langmai girl named Phuroi-nu<sup>4</sup> the daughter of the Langmai chieftain Khanghan Hanba, who got married to the Chengleis came one day to the house of her father with a small daughter carrying on her back. On her way she was struck by a piece of bamboo on her feet and died due to profuse bleeding. Her child who had not yet started talking was found playing without knowing her mother was dead, when Pankhaichamba a man belonging to a Khu-Man tribe came on a horse for hunting. He rescued the little child and took her on horse back. He adopted the little girl as he had no issue. The occurrence of this event is estimated to be in the latter part of the 11th century A.D. In the latter part of the 12th century A.D. the Chengleis had also inter-marriages with the Mangang Hao.

Moreover there is no indication at all that the Chengleis were Aryans or Dravidians or pre-Dravidians. From the above analysis we have every reason to believe the Chengleis were people belonging to a Mongoloid race. It is most likely they were of Tai origin particularly the tribe who founded the city of Cheng-rai in northern Thailand and who got mixed with tribes of Mon origin.

3. *ibid.*, Page-12.

4. *ibid.*, page-13.

Period of their arrival : The date of Nongta Lairen Pakhangba has been fixed to about 980 A.D. By taking this date the projected date of Poireiton is about 810 A.D. Details may be seen in the section on Poireiton. There are indications in literary sources like Poireiton Khunthok that some tribes had already settled on this valley when Poireiton and his horde arrived and settled on a little south of the plateau lying between the Leewang-yi (Imphal river) and the hills which later came to be known as Koubaru. They gave name Kangla to that plateau. Subsequent accounts reveal that the Chengleis and the Shelloy-Langmais had already settled there when Poireiton arrived.

The birth of the Tibeto-Burman language of Sino-Tibetan family of language is estimated to be about the 7th century A.D., when it became fully characterised.

It is seen from the above analysis that the Chengleis cannot be present in the Imphal valley earlier than the 7th century A.D. since their dialect is a Tibeto-Burman. Hence the Chengleis must have arrived during the period from about 700 A.D. to 810 A.D. It will be quite reasonable if we estimate the date of their arrival a little earlier than 810 A.D., say in the closing part of the 8th century A.D., since most of the Tibeto-Burman tribes began to disperse from their hive in and around Putao area and Hukong valley of northern Burma after the invasion of Ko-lo-leng and his successor I-mou-shun in the closing part of the 8th century A.D. and beginning of the 9th century A.D.

Our rough estimate on the growth of population on this valley as discussed in the section on Population Hypothesis estimating the date of first human settlement on this valley to be about the 8th century A.D. also supports it.

Contemporary civilization : We do not get materials dealing explicitly with the contemporary civilization of the Chengleis when they settled on this land. But it appears their civilization was not much higher than that of the Shelloy-Langmais. In Ningthourol Lambuba the Shelloy-Langmais are found to have been described

as primitive tribes. They were not very far off from those who lived without knowing the art of agriculture, who were naked and wild.<sup>5</sup>

The Chengleis began to move to the north-east of the hills now known as the Mapao hill where the Shelloy-Langmai settled, when all these tribes continued to live as good neighbours with the Poireis. Inter-marriages started more particularly among the Shelloy-Langmai and the Chenglei and their associated tribes. Poirei boys also started marrying girls of these tribes. The Poirei elders neither liked their boys to marry girls belonging to these tribes, nor their girls marrying to the boys of these tribes. There was a saying found to be current at about the 11th century A.D. or after, cautioning their youths against marrying girls of these tribes, "*Thangnga leikai poiganu (koiganu)* .", which literally means "Do not go to the settlement of the Thangngas for courting their girls .". The main theme and central idea of the literary piece *Khongjomnubi Nonggarol*<sup>6</sup> is also a caution against the Poirei

5. *ibid.*, page-5.

6. W. Yunjao Singh . An early History of Manipur, page-129. The gist of *Khongjomnubi Nonggarol* found in the said text is reproduced below.

"In old Manipur there is an interesting manuscript known as *Khongjomnubi Nonggarol*, which describes in an allegorical way how the two constellations Pleiades and Orion were so many lovers and how this love episode ended. In that book the Krittikas were regarded as so many girls of the Luwang family and Orion as so many Naga young-men. (The historian's view of using the name Naga here is probably to mean other backward tribes possibly the Chengleis and their associated tribes). In the story it is told that the girls often used to go out in search of fish outside the habitation of their colony where they chanced to meet the Naga boys, somehow or other became attached to one another and became devoted lovers. In time their secret love was known to the whole Luwang population and the girls were put to much privation and shame, they therefore contrived with the Naga boys to run away to heaven and live there without being known to and molested by anyone. They settled everything for the journey and fixed the place where to meet for the journey, but on the appointed day when the girls arrived at the foot of the hill from where they were to ascend the



girls marrying to those tribes lest they were to meet the fate of the *Khongjomnubis*. However it may be noted that in the beginning of the 11th century A.D. the two Man clans namely Thangnga and Kampong seem to have parted from the Chengleis. The remaining Chenglei clan Thangyi moved towards the east and settled somewhere in the Upper Iiril valley. It appears from Iiril valley they moved towards the south where they gradually got amalgamated with the Thoubal tribes and finally moved towards present Thoubal area along with other tribes at about 1300 A.D. The Thangyis possibly got mixed with the Ngangois of the Thoubal tribes,

The Chengleis are believed to have penetrated to this valley somewhere from the Somra tract in northern Burma. They came along the course of the Leel-wai Yi (Iiril river) through the flattened tops of hills and first settled near the plateau which became known as Kangla-tongbi.

In the present living festival of Umang Lai known as Lai Haraoba one item known as '*Lai matu thiba*' in which people would carry the deity in search of his wife supposed to be at the Thangnga settlement. The part of the function is also described as '*Lai Thangnga lekai koiba, Lai matu thiba*'. It reflects the Poireis at the time when the said function developed was very fond of marrying girls belonging to the Thangnga tribes. In the accounts

heaven their lovers were not found there, at that they were much disappointed, but still they were determined to proceed on the journey and then they left for heaven without the boys. The boys were coming behind them and on the way they overtook the girls, they all went together to Indra the king of heaven to pray him to assign some place for their residence but the king of heaven who knew everything of their love affairs, refused to comply with their request on the ground that his heaven was not intended for persons who would make unbecoming love. So they were not allowed to live together there. But as they beseeched him for his favour they were told that they would be able to meet one another at a particular time of the year they would not be visible to the whole world"

like Ningthourol Lambuba it is stated that the Poirei prince Naothingkhong married a girl named Narum Kangbi Santing Nganbi who belonged to the Thangnga clan of the Man Thangyas and Thangngas were of the same standard of civilization

## THE SHELLOY LANGMAI

The Shelloy-Langmais are believed to be one of the earliest settlers who settled on the northern part of the Imphal valley. The place where they first settled is located on the hill ranges running north to south on the east of the Kangla-tongbi plateau. They probably came along the course of the Leel-wai (Irl) river through the flattened tops of hills and settled on the southernmost part of the hill range by penetrating into this valley from the Somra tract in northern Burma.

We have very clear evidences from literary accounts of this land that the dialects of the Shelloy-Langmais belonged to some classic Tibeto-Burmans. As discussed earlier in previous sections, they called *mungbi* (road) for *lambi*, *lungbi* (bridge) for *thong*, *theba* (lake) for *pat*, *tolaba* (death) for *siba*, *teraba* (to return) for *hallakpa* etc. The dialects of this group of Tibeto-Burmans contain a chunk of words of Tai origin. So we may presume that the Shelloy-Langmais were a group of Tibeto-Burmans mixed with tribes of Tai origin.

The name of this tribe is found to have compounded by two distinct names namely Shelloy and Langmai. Frequently a tribe having two distinct clans are found to have been described in literary accounts like Ningthourol Lambuba as '*Thangnga-na mikouna, Kampong-na tungthanaba*' indicating two clans namely Thangnga and Kampong of a tribe. In a similar way we find '*Shelloy-na mikouna, Langmai-na tungthanaba*'. Taking the view, we may presume that the Shelloy and the Langmai were clans of a tribe whose name is not found in the account Ningthourol Lambuba; or, they were two different tribes having different ethnic identities. However there is also another possibility of deriving the word Shelloy from the profession to which these tribes used to live in later period. The Langmais were brazers in bell-metal. In the dialect of Poireis and some other Mongoloid tribes bell-metal is called *sen*

or *shel*, and hence *shelloy* means 'workers on bell-metal'. As there is the presence of Tai words in their dialect it may also be presumed that Shelloy were Shen Lao with phonetic variation. ShenLao is a later pronunciation of Shenlou a cognate tribe of Ngai Lao. In some manuscripts Shelloy is also written as Shellou. Again Shellou and Shenlou are the same word.

Intermarriages between Shelloy-Langmai and other neo-Tibetan tribes who settled at the source of the Kongba river called Kongba-ru<sup>1</sup> (Kongba maru) are recorded to have started as early as the 11th century A.D. Khuyoi Tompoka son of Nongta married Nong-moinu Ahongbi a girl belonging to the Langmai tribe. There is no impossibility of intermarriages between these tribes existing earlier than this. The Shelloy-Langmai and these group of neo-Tibetans were the closest neighbours. The source of the Kongba river is on the foothill where the Shelloy-Langmais settled.

We are facing one more difficulty as to how a Langmai girl was named Nongmoinu. The name Nongmoinu (possibly a mistake in spelling) or Nongmainu should have been given to girls belonging to an altogether different group of Tibeto-Burmans known as Nongmais who settled on the hill which is now known as Nongmai-jing after the name of the Nongmai tribe. Both Langmai and Nongmai however in a later period got merged with the Nongbals and subsequently in the 16th century A.D. all of them became known

1. The place Kongba-ru which literally means 'the source of the Kongba river' is frequently mentioned in the different accounts showing as the early home of a section of the Poreis. It is mentioned in Ningthourol Lambuba an occasion in which Thongathong the daughter of the Porei prince Naokal Ahanba (in some manuscripts as Naophang Ahanba), who lost her husband at a tender age in an engagement got re-married to the Nganu (Anga) chief named Shyarong, while on an outing at Chingaren, pointed her finger to a place lying to the north of Chingaren saying, "Awang lama pangbaram ashi-di ipam Porei-Meitei lam lamlen Kongba-ru Kanglang Chapengphei-bu malle hana taklamye"-page-69. The substance of the above text or statement is that the northern side of Chingaren looks like Kongba-ru the parental home area of the princess.

as Angoms. In the Angom clan there were two distinct Sageis or family titles. They were Langmaithem and Nongmaithem believed to have originated from Langmai and Nongmai respectively. Now Langmaithem has altogether disappeared and we find only Nongmaithems. It is believed that the Langmaithem got merged into the Nongmaithems and lost its independent existence. It therefore appears that the original name Nongmainu was Langmainu and later chroniclers entered all Langmainus as Nongmainus. It is therefore most probable that the original name of Nongmainu Ahongbi as found in the above mentioned account is Langmainu Ahongbi.

In conclusion it may be said that Shelloy or Shellou were the so-called Tibeto-Burmans with strong Tai elements. The Langmai on the other hand appears to be Tibeto-Burmans of Asiatic descent and seems to have some affinity with the Nongmai another Tibeto-Burman tribe.

It may be mentioned here a difference of spelling in the name of the prince has been detected. In some manuscripts Naophang Ahanba is said to be the uterine brother of Naophangba the 6th successor of Pakhangba. Naokhanba the 5th successor of Pakhangba had forcibly taken the wife of Thangyi Khongromba who had already conceived a child of five months term. She gave birth to a male child who was named Naophang Ahanba. She also bore a second son to him named Naophangba. There was a feud over the succession of throne when Naophanba died but Naophangba got the throne and Naophang Ahanba got simply the title prince. In the chronology of kings neither Naokal Ahanba nor Naophang Ahanba is found. It therefore seems, this Pomei prince is the one referred to above.

The area of Kongba-ru is the settlement of some early Pomeis is also mentioned in the same text Ningthouol Lambuba, page-7. It is said that there was a quarrel over the acquisition of paddy fields at Kongba-ru between Pakhangba and Kouba Angangnga a Kou(ba) tribe. Quoting the text which states, "Kouba Angangngana Kong-lou lamkheige saban lamdage haina lam chatthoklakpada Tubi-Yoi Nongta Lairen Pakhangbabu lamoknare". Here Kong lou means Kongba-lou meaning 'Kongba paddy field'.

## THE POIREI

The account Poireiton Khunthok meaning 'migration of Poireiton' available with us at present contains much interpolations, extrapolations and exaggerations. So we cannot take the whole book as an authentic source, however there will be no mistake if we squeeze and take only the central theme. Gist of the text is given in the section on Poireiton. We can assess that a group of people from Kangla of Khamnung Sawa<sup>1</sup> led by prince Poireiton migrated to this valley with a horde of men and women. These are the only tribes for which we have an account of migration to this land. We have every material for their way of life, custom, religious belief and their dialect from which we can deduct that this group of neo-Tibetan people consisted of tribes namely Chakkha, Khu, Lei, Nga, Man, Kham and Nung of which Khu appears to be the least in number, which constituted the Meiteis. Again Nga, Lei and Khu appear to be clan name of the Chakkhas. Most of the Khu-Nung group continued to stay in the ancestral home at Kham-nung Sawa.

The place of Kangla of Kham-nung Sawa is found to have located in the eastern Tibet at the tri-juncture of Tibet, Burma and Assam. It lies at about 97° E and 29° 14' N and continues to exist to this date also. The area around this Kangla is perhaps Khamnung Sawa. Geographically the rocks of Kangla of Khamnung Sawa belonged to a comparatively older rock than that of Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram. It belongs to the mesozoic rock.

**Kham-nung** In most early accounts the tribe name and the place name where that tribe inhabited are often found synchronous. Thus Kham-nung is both the name of a place where the amalgamated tribes Kham and Nung inhabited. The neo-Tibetans mentioned in this book in connection with tribes of Manipur were

1. Moirang Ningthourol Lambuba, edited by O. Bhogeswar Singh, page-116.

those group of people who possessed basically Tibetan traits but got mixed with other Mongoloids of Asiatic and Tai tribes. Materials so far collected from non-Manipur sources do not clearly indicate what type of neo-Tibetans settled on this land. However the neo-Tibetans who later became Poireis were an admixture of Himalayan Mongoloids and Tai tribes possibly those now inhabiting on the southern side of the Mekong river on northern Thailand. The word Nung in either suffix or prefix form are very common for these tribes. It is likely that some of these neo-Tibetans used the name Nung-bal, when the above mentioned tribes coerced into separate political units. The name Nungbal remained exclusively applied to the Chakkha-Nung group of people. The Chakkha-Nung group were later called Luwang.

Besides the Manipuri accounts there is a living Tibetan tribe called Kham-pa inhabiting in some eastern parts of Tibet. Tibet is divided into three natural regions of which the eastern region is known as the Khams<sup>2</sup>. This region is also called Mdo-Stod and comprises present Tsinghai province of China. The Khams region consists of the territory between *Sog-la Skya-bo* and Upper bend of the Hoang Ho or yellow river and the Tibetan Ram-chu. It is said that the best men, possibly warriors, were from the Khams. People of this region were known as Kham-pa meaning Kham-people, where 'pa' means 'people or man' in Tibetan language. The same name is used in old Meiteilon or Manipuri language, but the modern sound is Kham-ba. It is also seen that words of Khamba or Khampa origin are found in modern Manipuri language in good numbers. Some selected words belonging to Khamba or Khampa dialect are also given in the section of Meiteilon or Manipuri language.

Manipuri accounts including Ningthourol Lambuba describe the place from where these people migrated to this land as "*Khamlei minungkol (Kham-lei mi Nung-kol)*",<sup>3</sup> meaning "Khamland

2. Encyclopaedia Britannica, Vol. 18, page-374.

3. Ningthourol Lambuba, edited by O. Bhogeswar Singh, page-3.

the hive of Nung people" It is therefore seen that Kham is a name of a tribe as well as a name of a place where the Nung people came and settled possibly in large numbers

The Nung or Nong are said to be Tai tribes<sup>4</sup> The Tibetans too are themselves a mixed tribe having different dialects of which the Lhasa dialect is the lingua franca There are elements of Huns, Tartar, Chus, Chinese, Himalayan Mongoloids and other Asiatic tribes The dialect, custom, etc of the Nung people who came to this land i.e., Manipur plateau clearly show that they were a mixed group of people and were nearer to the Tibetans Hence they are taken as neo Tibetans The Nung people are believed to have moved to Kham as a sequence of the expulsion of the Tai by Tsi-Wang-Tsi in the 3rd century B C

It may be pointed out that the word Kham means gold in the dialect of some Mongoloids particularly the Pong dialect In that case Kham could have been an adjective of Nung and Kham nung a Tai tribe But the dialect of these people does not support it Their dialect is a neo-Tibetan and is generally grouped in the Tibeto Burman family It is also equally true that the dialect of a tribe cannot determine its racial origin Most of the Tai tribe who amalgamated with other tribes spoke a dialect which is basically a Tai dialect So there is less probability of Kham-nung being a Tai tribe

Khu nung This is one of the amalgamated tribes having an independent identity till this date in and around their ancestral home Kham nung Sawa in the juncture of Tibet, Burma and Assam The Khunugs were also called Khunung Khumans<sup>5</sup> indicating that there were another group of people other than Khu and Nung who settled in that area The Khunung Khumans who continued to stay in their ancestral home are by now called Mishmi meaning 'Mish man' The Mishmi in Assam zone used to be called

4 Dr Gogoi Tai and the Tai kingdoms, page-2

5 *ibid*, page 161.



*Miju Mishmi* and *Chullicota Mishmi* by the Assamese<sup>6</sup>, while those in the northern Burma zone are simply called Mishmi. The hill range lying to the south of Putao and to the west of the Mali river in northern Burma is called Khuman range indicating that, the Khumans occupied the south-east portion of Khunung area. The dialect of this group of people belonged to the *Nung-Ruwang* or *Nung-Luwang* group of the neo-Tibetan or Tibeto-Burman. While those Khunung Khumans who migrated to Manipur got mixed with other tribes and lost their separate ethnic identity except the clan name Khuman originated from Khuman in the Meitei set up. In the non-Meitei group, people of Khu origin who got mixed not only with the Nung and Man but also with Hou are now represented by the Tangkhuls inhabiting the north-eastern hills of present political Manipur. The Khuman in the Meitei set up is perhaps the most mixed clan which included a sizeable bulk of Bangals and proto-Bangals.

In Manipuri account it is stated that the people who lived in Sawa of Khamnung as *Sawa mi-Khu-rol*. Here mi-Khu may be interpreted either Khu-people or people of Khu. The first one appears to be more appropriate. Anyway Khu is both the name of a tribe as well as the place where the Khu people inhabited. Thus the Khunungs were either Nung people living in Khu or an amalgamated tribe of Khu and Nung living in the Khu area.

**Khuman:** The Khuman (Khu-Man) tribe or clan in the Khunung set up is either the Man people living in the Khu area or an amalgamated tribe of Khu and Man living in the Khu area. The above investigations indicate that the Khu people were the earlier inhabitants of the area or place which was awaiting a name to be given. Absence of the name gave rise to the naming of the place as Khu from the name of the Himalayan or neo-Tibetan tribe Khu.

The Man people are said to be of Mon origin. A cognate tribe of the Man is called by the Chinese Miaotzoe; and Mios by

6. *ibid.*, page-189.

the Shans. According to Dr. S. K. Chatterjee they were "possibly very early offshoots of the proto-Sino-Tibetan speaking Mongoloids, before the language was fully characterised, came down to south China and Burma, and from them descended Man and Miaotzoe people of South China and Karens of South Burma tribes of people which are Mongoloid in race but whose speech now appear to be distinct from other members of the Sino-Tibetan family...The Karens, now numbering over a million are Mongoloid from the north who were established in their present area of occupations in the hills between the Irrawaddy, the Salwin and the Menam rivers, by the 6th century A D"<sup>7</sup>

Thus the Man people of Khu in the Kham region appear to have come to the area of Khu in the Kham region by about the same time with the Karens i.e. at about the 6th century A D as peaceful settlers and settled there as subjects of the Sakiyan princes before some of them moved to Imphal valley in the beginning of the 9th century A D along with Poireton as his hordes.

The Mios or Miaotzoe possibly called themselves Miz or Mish from which *Mishmi* meaning 'Mish-people' of Upper Assam and Northern Burma derived. The Mishmis occupy mainly the north of Sodia in Upper Assam where the Brahmaputra enters India through the Mishmi range and the Putao area of Northern Burma where there is the Khuman range. Thus from the above investigations it is seen that the Mishmi and the early Khuman of Manipur were next to kins. It may be pointed out that the Marings and the Matems were also Man people. More details may be seen in the section on Funan, Maring and Mon-Khmer.

Lei-nung. Very little account is available about this tribe or clan of the neo Tibetans in non-Manipuri sources. Like Khamnung and Khunung, the word Lei of Leinung is both the name of a tribe as well as the name of a place where Lei people inhabited. The second part of the name i.e. Nung as discussed earlier, were Nung people inhabiting in Lei area. Thus the name Lei-nung indicates

7. Dr. S.K. Chatterjee : Kirata Jana-Krih JRASB Vol. XVI 1950. page-149

either Nung people inhabiting in Lei or an amalgamated tribe of Lei and Nung. Besides Lei-nung there was another tribe called Lei-hou as found in the Manipuri accounts. This tribe was also possibly an admixture of Lei and Hou. When these neo-Tibetan tribes settled on this land they flourished and later disintegrated. The Lei of Leinung or the Leinung absorbed some Leihous by inviting Nongta one of the great grandsons of Luwang Punshiba, who by that time was possibly the chief of the Leihous or a prominent man living in the Leihous as his mother Yabi-roka was the daughter of the Leihou chief. Lei appears to be the clan of the Chakkha as Yabi-roka is found to have been described as Chakkha Yabi-roka concurrently with Leinung Yabi-roka. Langmaiba one of the grandsons of Luwang Punshiba was the *Lambu-Tupu* meaning 'officer-in-charge' of the Leinungs and Leihous, who had begotten Nongta in the womb of Yabi-roka the daughter of the Leihou chief. The name Langmaiba seems to be a titular name. In the 16th century A. D. when mystification of ancient characters started, Nongta the full name Nongta Tukuplik, was given the name 'Pakhangba' of the Sanamahi-Pakhangba myth. Thus in some accounts Nongta is found to have been named as *Leinung lonja Pakhangba*. But some Meitei scholars interpret the meaning of *Leinung* as 'inside the earth' which is not only erroneous but also misleading. The word *Lei* has different meanings say, flower, tongue, earth, country, ear ring etc. and Nung has also a meaning in the dialects of some Mongoloids which became a component part of the Meiteis as 'inside', or 'interior'.

The ruling chiefs of these tribes at Khamnung Sawa belonged to a Himalayan tribe Chakkha (Sakya) and are discussed in the section on Haokap, Chingsang, Khunpham and Ngangcheng. They are however described to be Tibetan princes by some scholars like J.T.O. Barnard<sup>8</sup>. It is said that the Tibetan princes ruled before the coming of the Shans. From about the latter half

8. Dr. Gogo: Tai and the Tai kingdoms, page-159 foot note; and History of Putao by J.T.O. Barnard. JBRS Vol. ii, page-137-38.

of the 8th century A D the Shans became active in these areas since the invasion of Ko-le feng and I-mou shun, and in the 13th century A D the Mau Shans headed by Sukapha from Mungri-mungram in eastern Burma came and conquered some parts of Upper Assam

It appears, from Kangla of Khamnung Sawa they moved towards the south through some gorges along the course of the Ningthi (Chindwin) river and came upto Somra Tract. Then they possibly moved to the source of the river now known as the Iri river and finally settled to the south of the plateau now called Kangla-tongbi. It is believed that in the Somra Tract area Poireiton and his horde sheltered for a considerable length of time. It may be mentioned here that, physically we find to this date a place named Poi or Poirei a village within the political boundary present Manipur close to Somra Tract, We do not have any historical account as to how the place became known as Poi. However, as the place is close to the supposed route of Poireiton we are prone to think the name was given after the name of Poireiton. But it is more likely that the name was given by the Poi tribes in the 15th or 16th century A D.

This group of neo-Tibetans usually gave the name Kangla to the seat of administration. At a latter period they abandoned Kangla-tongbi and moved to some other areas where they named the new seat of administration as Kangla. This is possibly the reason why we are getting so many Kanglas. When other Kanglas were founded they possibly gave some adjectives to the old Kangla. Thus we get Kangla-tongbi, Kangla-sipha etc. Kangla-tongbi is found to be physically more elevated than other Kanglas.

Poireiton carved out a small principality at Kangla(-tongbi) at about 810 A D. They became soon prosperous. By the time when Poireiton was succeeded by his sons and grandsons, it appears the tribe became known as Poireis originating from Poireiton. The principality was also known as Poirei. It may be mentioned that there was a tribe named Poi. The named Poirei may be divided

into two parts *Poi* and *rei*, The word *rei* is equivalent to *lei* which means *leipak* meaning 'land'. So Poirei means *Poi-leipak* meaning Poi-land or land of Poi. As discussed earlier in Mongoloid dialect words are found having different meanings in different dialects and at the same time such words are very common. But these neo-Tibetans appear to have practically no relation with these Pois. The Pois also belonged to the Tibeto-Burman tribes who migrated from the hive of Tibeto-Burmans in and around Hukong valley towards the south and settled near the Chin hills at about the 13th century A.D. Later some of them moved to Lushai hills. Such similar sounding words create confusion and we are often led to the wrong side. It will be quite appropriate to mention again one such instance. There is a myth in which Pakhangba is said to have several children. One of his sons became Pong. According to the Pong account one of the ancestors of Pong who came to settle in the land of Mungrimungram somewhere in eastern Burma, was Khun-lai. The meaning of this word in present Meiteilon (Manipuri language) is 'village lord' where *khun* means village and *lai* means lord. As stated in earlier sections some scholars deduced Khun-lai was the son of Pakhangba. While commenting on the myth the scholars emphatically say that the meaning of the word clearly indicates Khunlai was the son of Pakhangba and further they feel that the Pongs were the descendants of Pakhangba without investigating what the word would mean in the dialect of the Pongs. In the dialect of the Pongs the word Khun-lai means 'prince-younger' and hence Village-Lord has nothing to do with Prince-Younger. The name Poirei deriving from the name of Poi tribe is not tenable. It is therefore more probable that the name is derived from the name of Poireiton. The meaning of the name Poireiton is discussed in the section on Poireiton.

## THE TANGKHUL

The Tangkhuls belonged to a group of hill tribes inhabiting northeastern hills of present Manipur. The Tangkhuls enrolled in the so-called Naga community. The Nagas have different social elements no doubt but the general belief of the Naga culture is markedly different from that of the Tangkhul culture. The Tangkhuls are not autochthones of Manipur. Hence they must have come from somewhere else. The Tangkhul tradition says that they came out of a cave possibly the Kanghui cave. But this tradition is not acceptable on scientific ground. There is no evidence that the mammals of human species sprang up from inside the earth. This types of traditions are also current among other hill tribes.

The Tangkhuls came sometime before or after the arrival of Poireiton by more or less the same route and settled on the hills lying to the east of the Upper Loelwai (Iril) valley. The precise date of their arrival cannot be ascertained due to want of materials, but we have account of them from the latter half of the 10th century A.D.

The Tangkhuls before they were known by that name as they say, called Wung. It is also not known whether the whole Tangkhul or some sub-clans were known by that name. According to Manipuri account the ruling clan of the Tangkhul appears to be Leihou. Again the Leihous are said to have belonged to the Ya-kkha clan. It is said according to the Tangkhul tradition that the name Tangkhul came after the name of Tangkhu a Wung tribe who lived somewhere on the north-eastern corner of Manipur known as *Nongpok Thong* meaning 'Eastern Gate'. Tangkhu was a prominent man and a born artist<sup>1</sup>. The dance performance of Tangkhu was much appreciated by the Poirei Kings. The dances

of Tangkhu became known as *Chingkheiröl* dances. Tangkhu became very popular and from his name his descendants and later his community came to be known as Tangkhuls. Tangkhu appears to have belonged to a Khu tribe as found in Khu-Nung, Khu-Man.

By about the 10th century A.D., some of the sub-clans of the Tangkhuls namely Leihou and Mahou were found to have settled on the hills lying to the east of Upper Iril valley. In literary accounts of Manipur the place where the Leihous settled is found to have said as *Tangkhul Leihoupok*<sup>2</sup> meaning Tangkhul-Leihou-birth. This indicates the Leihous were Tangkhuls. About the name of *Tangkhul Leihoupok* another meaning may also be interpreted. There is a kind of leaf known as *Leihou-La* generally used in early period for packing lunches in expeditions and lining the inner wall of vessels for fermenting wine. So *Tangkhul Leihoupok* could also have been a place of Tangkhuls where there were plenty of *Leihoulas*.

The Tangkhuls are likely to be one of the earliest tribes inhabiting the ancient kingdom of Manipur. They probably settled in the Upper Chindwin (Ningthi or Ingthi) valley also known as Kabow valley at a latter period, before they shifted to their present habitat.

The Tangkhuls belonged to a sub-Himalayan or neo-Tibetan tribe which will be seen in subsequent parts. As stated above the Leihous belonged to the Yakkha tribes. The ancestral home of these Yakkha tribes was probably on the south-eastern side of Tibet somewhere near Sakya Gompa, from where they migrated.

We can put forward two hypotheses as to how these sub-Himalayan tribes migrated to Kabow valley. Firstly, these sub-Himalayan people could have moved towards the east along the Tsangpo river (Brahmaputra) towards Arunachal Pradesh, from their ancestral home, then they entered Putao in northern Burma. From there they moved southwards to upper Chindwin valley. This is however not a practical route. They had to go through several deep gorges, ravines and thick forests. Secondly,

2. Ningthourol Lambuba, edited by O. Bhogeswar Singh. page-208.

they were subjects and followers of Abhi Raja the Sakiyan king who came to Kabow valley proper at about 200 B.C. The name given to Kabow valley by these settlers was Moriya and they came through Arakan. The Burmese account is silent about the route through which Abhi Raja came to Moriya via Arakan. More details may be seen in the section on Haokap, Chingshang, Khunpham, and Ngangcheng. In course of time these Tangkhuls moved towards the hills on the west as an impact of cross human movement following the invasion of Ko-lo-feng and Imou-shun on Tibet towards the close of the 8th century A.D. These tribes entered the present political Manipur by several routes from east to north-east and settled on the hill ranges now known as the Maring hills. They were further pushed northwards by the Marings and Funans in the latter part of the 11th century A.D. to their present habitat. In course of time they became degenerated into wild hill tribes.

The following points may be noted: (a) many scholars including European scholars observe that among the Tangkhuls they found people looking like classic Aryans<sup>8</sup> and even to this date such Tangkhuls are occasionally found, and (b) when the earrings of the Tangkhul culture of wearing a large metal ring co-axially by perforating the lower ears are removed, the ears become unnaturally long looking like the ears of Gautama Buddha statue.

The Tangkhuls are racially less molested than the people of the Imphal valley. Thus some traces of the ancient race and their culture are still visible. If Aryan elements are to be present at all it must have been in their earlier settlement possibly in Nepal Terai. There is neither historical evidence of their mixing with Aryan travellers or settlers as commonly believed, nor any other circumstances which may attribute to the mixing with the Aryan tribes since they settled in the ancient kingdom of Manipur. It is said that the tribe to which Gautama Buddha belonged used to perforate the ears for wearing ornaments like that of the Tangkhul culture. If this is true the Tangkhuls belonged to a cognate tribe



of the Moranga. Gautama Buddha belonged to Mora-Nga (Moranga) clan of the Himalayan tribe. The Tangkhuls according to Manipuri accounts belonged to Ya-kkha tribe.

Names with the suffix '-la' or '-ra' are very common among the Tangkhuls specially female names like Lara-la, Simthang-la etc. The names of the sons of Emperor Asoka and others are also found to have similar suffixes namely Tiva-ra, Anu-la, Kana-la<sup>4</sup> etc. It is therefore strongly suggestive to the Tangkhuls belonging to a cognate tribe to which Emperor Asoka belonged. Emperor Asoka's earlier names were Dhama-soka, Chanda-soka, Kama-soka etc. It is said that Emperor Asoka belonged to the Maurya tribe being the son of Bindusara. Some scholars however claim that Asoka was the son of Nemita. There is no impossibility of Bindusarawas also called Nemita. Anyway if Asoka belonged to the Himalayan tribe, the suffix '-soka' as found in his other names too suggest a Sakiyan word. In Manipuri account Yabi-roka the mother of Pakhangba is found to have the same formation. However in the Indian accounts, it is said that Subhadraangi the mother of Asoka was kept away from the king by palace intrigue and when at last she gained access to him bore a son, she said of the child, 'I am without sorrow' i.e. A-soka<sup>5</sup>. When she bore the king a second son she called him Vitasoka, 'sorrow terminated'. It is certain that Sakya is an Aryan style of the name of a Himalayan tribe to which the clan of Asoka belonged,<sup>6</sup> which was originally not

4. The women forenames with suffix '-la' or '-ra' are found in the entire family of the Indo-European languages. Thus we find English women forenames like Ange-la, Barba-ra, Bel-la, Do-ra, Flo-ra, Isabel-la, Mai-ra, My-ra, No-ra, Pam-la, Pau-la, Shei-la, Stella Ve-ra, Vio-ra etc. besides Aryan and Indo-Aryan formations. It also had impact on the Sinitic family of languages and we find woman name called Samon-la (Sao-Mon-la) in the Tai formations.

5. Romila Thapar: Asoka and the decline of the Mauryas, page-21.

6. According to Hindu literary traditions Chandragupta Maurya the grandfather of Asoka is said to be the son of a Nanda king by a Sudra woman named Mura and from whose name the dynasty came to known as

Sakya. It could have been any one of the following ; Chakkha, Chakha, Saka, Soka etc, of which, as stated above, Chakkha is traceable in Manipuri account-

It is discussed in the section on Religion that Lord Siva is described to be a good dancer. It is quite likely that the sub-Himalayan tribes whose god was Siva were good dancers. The Manipuri accounts and traditions indicate the Leihous were good dancers besides the dance performance of Tangkhu as stated above. In the living festival of Umang Lai known as Lai-Haraoba a dance named '*Leihou maibi jagoi*' meaning 'dances of Leihou female priest' is found to have been performed by the *maibis* meaning women priests or priestesses. Here the name Leihou clearly indicates a tribe, however some people insist on interpreting the meaning of Leihou as 'beginning of creation'. Further the Leihou maibis are supposed to perform dances known as (1) *Paring Lansang* (2) *Sendrai*, (3) *Nongdrai* and (4) *Leitrai* in the said function.

The Tangkhuls probably belonged to a sub-Himalayan or neo-Tibetan tribe which was a cognate tribe of the Sakya. They first moved to the plains of northern India and then to the Kabow Valley via Arakan in the second century B C or they moved towards the east. Anyway they were found in the tri-juncture of Tibet, Burma and Assam before their entry into present political Manipur.

The Tangkhuls and Poirais lived together in good relations with social intercourse upto the time of the Poirai king Tabungba (c 1403-1415 A.D.). There is an episode in which king Tabungba

Maurya dynasty. But the Buddhist traditions refer him to have belonged to a Kshetriya clan of Moriyas. Modern researches however suggest the latter as more dependable.

Again Moriya is found in the Buddhist accounts as Mora-Nga as discussed in other sections of this book. Mora-Ngas were Nga inhabitants of Mora area where there were plenty of peacocks. Nga tribes were called Anga in Indian accounts and Nga-nu in Manipuri accounts. Hence Asoka probably belonged to a Nga-nu.

is said to have an affair with Larala Sang-nu the beautiful wife of Khamlang(ba) the Chingsong chieftain. By that time all the Tangkhul tribes were paying tributes to the Poirei kings. Khamlangba had a grudge and planned to assassinate king Tabungba. The account, Ningthourol Lambuba however denies the charges and says that it was a baseless and false rumour. Khamlangba was not happy and incited to revolt most of the Tangkhul tribes against the Poirei king and played a double standard by pretending to be a faithful chief. He came to the palace and invited the king to suppress the hostile tribes. Accordingly king Tabungba arrived with a force at Chingsong where Khamlangba was planning to assassinate him. But his wife Larala Sang-nu intervened and the plan was dropped. Instead she requested king Tabungba to take rest for the night as they were awaiting him with freshly fermented wine and meat for the dinner specially prepared for him. While resting for the night, one of the nobles of king Tabungba named Akoijam Tonkhinba without any force assaulted the revolting tribes where he was killed. On hearing the information the king rushed to crush them immediately but he was murdered possibly on the same night.

Since the death of Tabungba a wedge between the Poireis and the Tangkhuls had been thrusted and the Tangkhuls began to live in isolation. Thus the social intercourse between the two was on the wane till the day of Pamheiba (Garib Niwaz) when a complete prohibition on intermarriages had been proclaimed.

The above mentioned Tangkhul tribes namely Leihou, Mahou, got some of them totally amalgamated with the Poireis earlier. It may be mentioned that the Ao Nagas of Nagaland appear to be a cognate tribe of the Tangkhuls, and perhaps a cognate tribe of Leihou and Mahou which later assumed the new appellation Tangkhul. The prefixes Lei and Ma in Lei-hou and Ma-hou appear to be the place names to where the Hou tribes inhabited in Leinung area or the names of tribes. Ao appears to be a phonetic variant of Hou. Lei-hou and Ma-hou may easily be changed to Lei-ao and Ma-ao respectively, where Hou changes to Ao.

“The Ao is distinguished from all his neighbours physically by his degree of brachycephaly. He derives his immediate origin from the eastward in what is now northern Sangtam country, and he seems to have some affinity with the Hinduized Meitei of the Manipur Valley. He uses one item of material culture markedly different from that used by all neighbours for the same purpose, and possibly which does not recur nearer than the Mekong valley between Burma and Siam”.<sup>6</sup>

The culture of the Ao Nagas clearly proves that they belonged to a cognate tribe of the ancient Himalayan Mongoloids. However it is not known to which clan of the Chakha (Sakya) or Moriya did the Ao belong. The pre-Buddhist, rather the Vedic culture which has hitherto been presumed to have associated with the Aryan tribes is found to have been preserved by the Ao Nagas of this date. It may be pointed out that the Vedic people were an admixture of Himalayan Mongoloids and Aryans as against commonly supposed Aryans.

“Dr. S. K. Chatterjee even finds resemblances between the Vedic ‘*Sula-gavya*’ and the Ao Naga *Mithan* sacrifice; the animal was killed in each case by means of a stake of wood piercing its heart. Dr. Chatterjee further holds that there is likelihood of Aryan speaking followers of Vedic religion and the Mongoloids with their primitive religion influencing each other in certain aspects of their religion and social life. The elaborate nature of latter Vedic age sacrifices where sheep, goats, cows or oxen and horses were killed, sacrifices which took up days and in which the householder and his wife had to take part in the strictly ordered sequence of the ceremonials show a strange agreement in both form and spirit with the elaborate ceremonials ‘of the feasts of merit’ like the bull killing sacrifice and the *mithan* or wild bison-killing sacrifice as is still in practice among the Ao Nagas. The resemblances between the Vedic *Sula-gavya* sacrifice and Ao

6. M. Alamchiba : A brief historical account of Nagaland, page-7.

Naga *mithan* sacrifice are indeed striking ; the animal was killed in each case by a sharp stake of wood piercing its heart".<sup>7</sup>

J. P. Mills in his investigation on the custom and belief of the Ao Nagas, had found more similarity with the Thado-Kuki than the Khasi, Garo and Kachari. He also found ore similarity among some Burmese tribes than the tribes of further east, but found practically very little with the Santal, Oraon and Mundra tribes. He however failed to investigate with the Himalayan Mongoloid tribes inhabiting Southern Tibet and Northern India upto Ladak and beyond, if he did the result could have been very interesting and conclusive. Most of the inhabitants of Nagaland were people of Asiatic and Tai origin with occasional Australoid elements, and with the exception of the Ao and some other tribes

As the Tangkhuls trace their origin to Samjok (Thangdaut) before coming to their present habitat in the northern hills of present Manipur, the Ao too were inhabitants of the ancient kingdom of Manipur before moving to Nagaland. It is most likely that the Ao first settled in the Tangkhul area of Manipur in the Upper Iril valley at Makokchung a little northwest of Sagolmang, and then they moved to Nagaland and settled in the Ong-pang-khong range. The precise date of their leaving Manipur territory is not known but cannot be earlier than the closing part of the 11th century A D when the second wave of Austro-Asiatic tribe began to move into India through Manipur and other parts of eastern India. Gradually from Ong-pang-khong range they moved to Makokchung (Makokching) and are by now known as the Ao Nagas.

In conclusion the Tangkhuls were tribes of Lei, Khu, Hou along with some other elements.

7. Dr. S. K. Chatterjee : Kuata-Kriti JRSB Vol. XXV No. 2, 1959, page-181, and B. K. Barua : A Cultural History of Assam (Early period) page-223.

## THE HAOKAP, CHINGSANG, KHUNPHAM AND NGANGCHENG

These tribes were generally called Hao tribes as found in literary accounts like Ningthourol Lambuba <sup>1</sup> They also came by the north-eastern routes of other Tibeto-Burmans and neo-Burmese, and settled on some hills on the north-east of the Nongmaijing hills. When they settled on this land, it appears, they became very prosperous as evident from the account that they were frequently attacked by other tribes and at the same time the Poirai kings married girls belonging to these tribes. Starting from Taothing-mang the grandson of Pakhangba upto Pengsiba, these princes successively married girls belonging to these tribes.<sup>2</sup> Very little account is available of these tribes from the Manipuri source. These group of neo-Burmese had some affinities with those neo-Burmese who came to this land at a later period from the southern side. These earlier tribes probably amalgamated with the Poirais.

The first reference of these tribes is found from the latter half of the 11th century A.D. Ningthourol Lambuba states that one hundred families of these Hao tribes settled on the southern hills. By that period the capital of a group of the Poirais who were later known as Mangangs was on the Upper Iril valley at the source of the Kongba river commonly called Kongba-ru. Therefore the settlement of these Hao tribes was to the south of their principality. It is estimated that they must have arrived on this land at least in the 10th century A.D. or early part of the 11th century A.D.

**Ethnic origin :** As for the origin of these tribes we have to recourse to the ancient history of Burma. The Burmese account Tagaung Yazawin says that the first Sakya prince from India to

1. Ningthourol Lambuba, edited by O Bhogswar Singh, page-8.

2. *ibid.*, page 7-8.

enter Burma was Abhi Raja<sup>3</sup> of Kapilavasthu ( Kapilavastu or the Middle Kingdom ) in the year 923 B.C. According to Hall the date is 850 B.C. Abhi Raja came along with army and followers. It is said that he arrived in Burma by way of Arakan and founded for the first time the Sakiyan Kingdom called Sangassarattha in the Tagaung country of Burma with its capital called Kambuja Thintawc or Chindwe on the bank of the Irrawaddy river. It was in the site of old Pagan. It appears Abhi Raja ceased to have connection with his own country and he became mixed with local population. He had two sons namely Kan Rajahgyi and Rajahnge in their Burmanised forms. It is quite natural that he carried the pre-Buddhist culture and tradition of the Sakyas.

When Abhi Raja died his two sons namely Kan Rajahgyi (Prince elder) and Kan Rajahnge (Prince younger) had a dispute over the succession of throne. When the elder prince came to know that his younger brother was trying to possess the whole kingdom for himself, he left his kingdom and moved down the Irrawaddy and then proceeded upto the Chindwin river and founded a dynasty at Kale to the south of Kabow valley. He placed his son Muducitta (Madhucetra) as the ruler of Pyu, Kanran and Sak (Thek) tribes at Kyaukpadung to the south east of new Pagan, Muducitta then moved to Rakhaingyi the country of Rakhaing or the Arakanese leaving behind his lines of rulers at Kyaukpadung to the south-east of new Pagan. He founded the kingdom of Dhanyavaii. It is said that the last ruler of the Tagaung Sakiyan family of Kyaukpadung is probably Tambula.

In Tagaung proper the descendants of Kan Rajahnge continued to rule till they were attacked by the Tayoks (Tarops).<sup>4</sup> It is said that the thirtythird descendant of Abhi Raja, the Sakiyan prince of

3. Tagaung Yazawin, and also see Dr. Gogoi: Tai and the Tai kingdoms, page-104.

4. "In 419 B.E. (A.D. 1057), according to the Hsen-Wi chronicles, Anawrahta also made journey to the Tarop country of Gandhala which was the kingdom of Nan Chao in Yun-nan, to ask the Tarop Utibwa for the Lord's

the old Pagan was Binnaka Raja. It was during his reign the Tayoks as stated above from Ghandhala (Yun-nan) invaded his country. The Tayoks captured and destroyed Tagaung Binnaka Raja fled from his country and moved with his followers and family towards the Mah stream He took refuge at Male on the right bank of the Irrawaddy river After sometime Binnaka Raja died at Male as fugitive His follower then split up into three groups. One group moved down the course of the Irrawaddy river and entered the western country ruled by the descendants of the Sakya dynasty of Tagaung The western country of the Sakyas

holy tooth possessed by the latter" Tai and the Tai kingdom  
Dr Gogoi, page 143

Uti means emperor "U ti is possibly the Chinese title emperor and bwa, a form of Hpa, hence and word U tibwa refers to the king of Nan Chao who was a Tai king"—see page 143 foot note Tai and the Tai kingdoms, Dr Gogoi Utibwa is the Burmese style and in Manipuri style it is Utiba Such names are also found among the Meiteis.

In the burmese chronicles "Tarops and Tarets are said to have emigrated into Burma from the Sien country in the kingdom of Gandhala "Sir Aruhur Phayé says the Manchus are called Tarets by the Burmese Parker doubts the fact and demands his authority" (see foot note on page 104 of the above mentioned book) It may be noted that the similarity of place names and names of persons found among the people believed to be of Koge origin of the Meiteis and Manchus of South Korea suggests a common origin The political history of Nan Chao proceeding Utiba's period strongly suggests the subjects of Utiba were not all Tai Hence even if king Utiba was of Tai origin his subjects were not necessarily all Tai. Chengmaisu (Cheng-mai-su) a Chinese officer who fled from the Imperial court of China, took asylum in Nan Chao He soon raised to power by murdering an infant king son of Leng Swen. He became king. Thus the ruling line passed on to the people of the Chinese origin. However, General Yan-kau-heng who is said to be an illegitimate son of king Leng Swen, usurped the throne from the successor of Cheng-mai-su, and further said his successors ruled till it was destroyed by Khubai Khan in 1253 A D It is therefore what the Manipur accounts describe the Kege's other than Tai holds good. "Utibwa mentioned here appears to be prince Si-hien (1045-77 A.D) of Nan Chao, who ruled for thirty-one years and beheaded the Man tsu leader Beng Kao" -page-106 of the above mentioned book.



were the areas of the southern part of the Kabow valley and the south of it. Some Moriya princes also came along with Abhi Raja. The rulers of the Kabow valley used the clan name as the surnames of their names. The capital of this western kingdom was at Kaletaungnyo to the south of Kabow valley.

“The place name Moriya is from the Moriyas of Pippalivana. Moriya occurs in the Buddhist literature, such as Dhamapada. In Gotama-Purana it is called Moranga and in the Arakanese chronicle it is mentioned as Mowrin and now it is Mwerin. Moriya is a classic name of Kabow Valley and there is also the Moreura metropolis of Ptolemy. Mauroya, as Col Burney tells us of Burmese history, preceded Tagaung as seat of Sakya king (see Col. Burney in JASB v 163). Mauroya is now known as Mueyen (a Burmese form), according to Yule, and is a town not far south from Bhamo. Probably Dhaja Raja’s first kingdom was in the Kabow valley and Mueyen was its capital and the second kingdom in Thintwe in Tagaung country Mauroya, after the name of the ruling clan, was perhaps another city south of Bhamo. The concurrence of place name indicates that not only the Sakyas but also Moriyas came to Burma and built cities. The Mauryas belonged to a Himalayan clan like such other peoples as the Lichhavis of north Bihar and Nepal. With their gradual absorption in the Brahmanical society, they claimed the status of Kshetriyas, although orthodox Brahmins regarded them no better than the Sudras”.<sup>5</sup>

Ptolemy in his geography mentions three cities in the Ningthi (Chindwin) valley. They were Triglypton possibly Thangdaut (Samjoak), Tugma probably Tumu and Moreura the Kabow valley which were of Sakiyan and Morian cities. These cities came into existence from about the second half of the 2nd century B.C. and Ptolemy noticed them at about the second half of the 2nd century A.D.

The second group of Binnaka Raja’s followers moved eastward and founded the ‘nineteen Shan states of Burma’. “This shows that the members of this group were Shans. But the Shans of

5. Dr. Gogoi: Tai and the Tai kingdoms, page-III foot note.

these nineteen Shan states became known as 'the descendants of Binnaka Raja'. It was possibly from the habit of referring to Binnaka Raja as their king that they were looked upon as his descendants by their neighbours".<sup>6</sup> It is also not at all impossible to assume that the ruling chiefs of this group were the descendants of Binnaka Raja while the subjects were of Tai origin

"Thus it is evident that the Shans from south-west China had already settled in Upper Burma from before the reign of Binnaka Raja and later became his subjects. They must have come with invading armies from Yun-nan and also as peaceful settlers, group by group from very early times and the Shans of Tagaung became subjects of the rulers of the Sakya family. It was a section of these Shans that accompanied Binnaka Raja in his flight from Tagaung. It is possibly this section of the Raja's follower, who, after the Raja's death preferred to start a colony of their own nearer the Shan neighbours of the east".<sup>7</sup>

The third group continued to stay at Male with the widow queen named Naga Seng. According to Glass Palace Chronicle the spelling is given as Nagahsein<sup>8</sup>.

At this juncture another Sakyan king named Dhaja Raja fled from his country and entered Burma by the Arakan route and arrived at Kabow valley. He renovated the Kingdom of Moriya which was a former seat of Sakyan princes. After sometime he visited Male where he met the widow queen Naga Seng. "Thereafter the Sakyan king perished in the danger of Vitaputa, and a Sakyan king Dhaja Raja fled with his followers from the Middle country, and when he came to Male on the Upper Irrawaddy he wedded the queen Nagahsein, both being true Sakyans of the same blood, and rebuilt and reigned in the old kingdom of Tagaung. From him onwards in unbroken succession the Thado lines of

6. *ibid.*, page-110.

7. *ibid.*, page-110.

8. An Introduction to Tribal languages and culture to Manipur (7 tribe) published by the State Kala Akademi, Manipur, Pge-137.

Tagaung kings sprang and flourished, and in the seventeenth generation Thado Maharaja became king".<sup>9</sup>

In the Tagaung country Dhaja Raja reigned over the ancient kingdom of Sangassarattha or Sankissa of Abhi Raja. Dhaja Raja virtually restored and reconstructed the old Sakiyan kingdom in Burma. "On ascending the throne he assumed the title Thado Jambudipa Dhaja Raja and change the name of his kingdom into Panchala. This Sangassarattha of the Sakiyas is Tagaung of the Burmese and Tung Kwang of the Shans. Dhaja Raja's kingdom was founded according to the Burmese chronicle in the twentieth year of the religion (523 B.C.) and according to the Shans in the twentieth year of the same (519 B.C.)".<sup>10</sup>

"Dhaja Raja's dynasty, a line of seventeen kings ruled at Tagaung (old Pagan) until, within one generation posterior to the year A.D. 568, it was displaced by Kun Long, who installed his eldest son Ai-Khunlong on the throne of that kingdom".<sup>11</sup>

Relying on these dates, 16 unbroken lines of kings had to rule from 523 B.C. to 568 A.D. which is a span of 1091 years. So the average ruling period of a king comes to about 70 years. Taking this into account the longevity of, say, the 13th and the 14th successors should have come to about 690 years and 740 years respectively as discussed in the section on Treatment on Kumbaba, which are absurd figures. So 523 B.C. as the date of Dhaja Raja is an exaggerated one. Taking, say, about 20 years as the average ruling period, a provisional date of Dhaja Raja which is nearer to reality is obtained by deducting  $16 \times 20$  years from 568 A.D. a dependable date. This comes to 248 A.D. as the date of Dhaja Raja.

It is said that few years before Dhaja Raja's accession to the Tagaung throne the Tayoks (Yan-nanese) invaded Burma. So the Tayok's invasion must have been few years before 248 A.D. For the

9. Class Palace Chronicle, page-60, see also page-137 of the above book.

10. Dr. Gogoi: The Tai and the Tai kingdoms, page-112.

11. *ibid.*, page-113.

invasion of the Tayoks we have to recourse to the history of the Shans.

“Khunlong’s success seems to have been made easier by a second major invasion of Burma by the Shan Tayoks (Tarops) from Yun-nan about A. D. 241”.<sup>12</sup> It appears Dr. Gogoi took the invasion of Tayoks during the reign of Binnaka Raja as mentioned in the Burmese chronicles as the first invasion of Tayoks. It is clearly seen that the invasion of the Tayoks was in the year 241 A.D. and this very invasion is recorded in the two accounts with different dates. Moreover Shans invading Burma few years before 523 B.C. is very unlikely since the Shans began to move towards the south in large numbers as a result of oppression and expulsion by the Chinese emperor Shi-Wang-Shi in 214 B.C.<sup>13</sup> It is therefore seen that the Shans became active in Burma only after this date.

Binnaka Raja is said to be the 33rd successor of Abhi Raja. As stated above the dates of Abhi Raja and Dhaja Raja are 923 B.C. and 523 B.C. respectively according to the Burmese chronicle. So roughly 33 kings had to rule  $923 - 523 = 400$  years, which is reasonable. Hence the date of Abhi Raja is obtained by deducting 400 years from 248 A.D., the reconstructed date of Dhaja Raja, to about 152 B.C. as against 923 B.C. Hence the provisional date of entering Burma by Abhi Raja is the 2nd century B.C.

The Burmese account discussed in the foot note given above cannot be relied on since it is based on exaggerated dates. As we have projected a more reasonable date of arrival of Abhi Raja, the happening in the Mauryan Empire during the first half of the 2nd century B.C. may be attributed to his fleeing from the Mauryan Empire. During this period the Mauryan Empire collapsed and in about 180 B.C. the last Maurya king Brihadratha was slain by his minister Pusyamitra the Su-Nga (Sunga), and he came to power. Thus the Sunga dynasty was born, and at the same time the foreign

12. *ibid.*, page-113.

11. *Ibid.*, page-37.

powers like the Bactrian Greeks were pushing towards the east and they were very close to Magadha. Because of this political upheavals and its aftermath, the Sakiyan and Moriyas fled from their native kingdom towards other places. Thus Abhi Raja arrived in the valley now known as Kabow valley at about 152 B.C. as discussed above. This hypothesis seems to be more probable.

The period of the advent of the Sakyas and Moriyas into the western part of present political Burma in the closing part of the second century B.C. is also suggested by Sir W. Elliot. "Col. Gerini after suggesting the possibility of Kalingas and Andhras penetrating into the western Burma, as they were masters of the valley of the Ganges from the frontier of Magadha to the sea, concluded that 'the dominion that Kalingas did not last long'. As soon as their power waned and they were driven away by later intruders towards the South of India, an event which according to Sir W. Elliot happened about a century before the Christian Era".<sup>14</sup> After some shadowy successors the Mauryas declined rapidly. The Andhras established a powerful dynasty in the Deccan after shaking off the Mauryan yoke. Brihadratha the last Maurya was slain about 180 B.C. by his commander-in-chief Puyamitra Sunga who founded a new dynasty known as the Sunga Dynasty as stated above. Sunga is also a name of a Himalayan tribe and its original pronunciation could not have been *Su-nga*.

So from the above analysis it is seen that the date of Abhi Raja the Sakiyan king to be sometime in the 2nd century B.C. and that of Dhaja Raja to be in the second half of the second century A.D. are fairly reasonable. It may be pointed out that Dhaja Raja is described to be a Sakiyan king in the Burmese chronicles but the Indian mythology depicts him to be a Maurya King. The Aswamedha Parva of the Mahabharata of Jaimini believed to be a 8th century A.D. scholar who extrapolated that chapter describes Dhaja Raja as Mayur Dhaja.

The Burmese account, Glass Palace Chronicle gives an Indian account which attributed to the fleeing of Sakiyan princes from

14. W. Yumjao Singh, An Early History of Manipur, page-22.

**Kapilavastu.**<sup>15</sup> The name Thado (Thadou or Thadoi) found in the above chronicle is probably derived by compounding two names Tho and Do or Doi. The name Tho is said to be a local variant of Doi according to Prof Coedes.<sup>16</sup> The Thos were originally a group of Tai people. At present they are found to have

- 15 Glass Palace Chronicle, page 4. "Prasenadi (Prasenajit), the Khosalan king of Savatthi, sought in marriage a daughter of Mahanama king of Kapilavasthu, who, desirous of preserving the purity of his race, gave him not a princess of the royal blood but gave him his daughter by a slave woman, the princess Vasabhakhattiya. And she was made queen and bore prince Vitaputa. He, when became of age, visited Kapilavasthu. Now when he returned home, they washed with milk the place he occupied, reviling it as the place of a man-slave born. When he came had to know of it, he nursed with wrath and said, 'When I am king I will wash in blood of their throat'. So when his father was no more he remembered his wrath and marched out with his fourfold army thence to destroy the Sakyan prince, but the Blessed Buddha prevented him. However the fourth time the Buddha, considering the past life history of the Sakyans prevented him not, and Vitaputa marched with a great army and reached Kapilavasthu and slew the whole Sakyan race, save for those who dwelt with king Mahanama, not sparing even the suckling babies. Thereafter the Sakyans took refuge in diverse places, such as the cities of Moriya, Yakkhagani, Panduraja. When thus the Sakyan prince perished, Dhaja Raja, the Sakyan king moved with his followers from the Middle country and first founded and reigned in Moriya.'

According to the Indian accounts, Ajatasattu the king of Magadha married the daughter of Prasenajit. Again Prasenajit is said to have sought an interview with Gautama Buddha to express his remorse for sin. The visit of Ajatasattu is depicted on the stupa of Barhut which is estimated to be in the 2nd century B.C. There is also a discrepancy of about three centuries in the dates of Gautama Buddha and the Barhut Stupa. It therefore seems that the visit as found in traditions is an extrapolation.

Anyway we notice the discrepancy on the Burmese date of 923 B.C. and 2nd century B.C. of Barhut Stupa which are of Prasenajit period.

occupied chiefly in the eastern part of Indo-China on the east of the Red river and KwangSi in China, They are said to have spoken a dialect of Shan but substantially altered due to the presence of Mons and Anamese. According to Denikar, 'the Thos are sub-brachycephalic of lofty stature having elongated face, straight non-Mongoloid eyes and brownish complexion'.<sup>17</sup> The Thados living in Manipur and on south-east of Manipur in Burma, speak a dialect much influenced by other Tibeto-Burman dialects. It has changed substantially to a Tibeto-Burman dialect.

As seen from the Manipuri accounts, it is a common practice when two tribes merged together they used both the names of their respective tribes to denote the name of the new amalgamated product e.g. Heirem-Khunjan when Heirem and Khunjan merged, Kege-Moirang when Kege and Moirang merged and so on. Similarly in the dialects too we find the same process e.g. *lai ja-ishmy* means water, *taoba-hui* means, dog, *shingel-leirang* means flower etc Thus it is most probable when the tribes Tho and Do merged together they used the name Tho-do and it further changed to Thado.

According to the traditions of the Thado, they had no common name of their tribe and they were divided into three linguistic groups. It is said that there was a man who had three sons. The eldest spoke Lamyang, the second spoke Thadou and the third son spoke, some say, Vapai and some say Manipuri language.<sup>18</sup> It is seen from this tradition that the Lamyang, the Thadou, the Vapai or a tribe who became a constituent part of the Meiteis were cognate tribes. Again, cognate tribes of Lamyang were probably Mayang, Thongnang, and possibly Khamyang who according to some scholars are said to be of Shan origin, The meaning of *Khamyang* according to Mau Shan dialect is 'gold-glittering' where *Kham*

17. *ibid.*, page-26 foot note

18. An Introduction to the tribal languages and culture to Manipur (7 tribes) : published by the State Kala Akademi, Manipur, page-146.

means gold *yang* means glittering. Most of the Mayangs and some of the Thongnang frequently used the suffix '-yang' in their names like Kaibayang, Takayang etc. Further the Thongnangs are described to be Kuki origin according to the Tripura chronicle, Rajmala with some variation in spelling. Manipuri accounts usually refer to Thongnang and Mayang as one tribe and usually written as Thongnang-Mayang. Details may be seen in the section on Mayang.

It is seen from the Burmese chronicle, the Glass Palace Chronicle that the Sakiyan rulers assume the title or name Thado since the time of Dhaja Raja. So it is obvious that the Thado Maharajas of Tagaung were of Sakya origin. In early period these Sakiyan used to call themselves by the Indian names like Abhi Raja, Binnaka Raja etc. and like Rajahnge in the Burmanised form. But in latter period they used mostly local names.

With the coming of the Sakiyan princes from India, Burma became a congenery of petty principedom till the rising of the Shan power. Thus the early ruling race of Burma were Himalayan tribes who were partially Aryani ed and the subjects were mainly Himalayan race, Tai, Tibeto-Burman and other Asiatic tribes.

It is seen from the above analysis that the Thados were of Tai origin but got mixed with the Himalayan tribe Sakya and some other Asiatic tribes. The tribes like Haokap, Chingsang, Khunpham and Ngangcheng as found in the Manipuri accounts from the time of the Poirei king Taothingmang were possibly some clans of the Thados. The earlier name of Taothingmang is Yoiheiton. He married a girl belonging to these tribes and since then, it is believed, he had changed his name to Taothingmang. This name seems to be an Old Kuki word. The present principal clans of the Thadous are said to be Singsol, Chongloi, Hangsen, Keepgen, Haokap, Changsen, Khangam besides Thadou proper. It appears the Thadous of to-day further got mixed with Chin and Sak (Thek) tribes. They had developed a name Kuki and divided into two groups namely the Old Kuki and the New Kuki. Old Kuki includes



Kom, Chothe, Koireng, Purum, Mantak, Namphou, Lamgang or Hiroi. Some scholars include the Chins too in the Old Kuki group. All the Kuki clans which are not included in the above are said to be New Kukis. The Old Kukis are those neo-Burmese who migrated to this land by about the 11th century A.D. before they were further mixed with other tribes. It is this old Kuki who constituted an important element of the Meiteis.

But the names of persons belonging to this group of people as recorded in the Manipuri accounts clearly indicate them to be racially a little different from that of the Thadou proper. The Thadou were an admixture of Tho a Tai origin and Sakya a Himalayan tribe as discussed above, whereas this group of people who are categorised as Old Kuki were an admixture of Lai a Tai tribe and Khu a Himalayan tribe as the names like Lai-tong-Khu, Hao-nu-Khu etc. indicate. The word Kuki seems to be a phonetic variant of the name *Khu-Ki* where *Ki* is perhaps a tribe of Chin origin who held from China and settled in south-western Yun-nan. In conclusion, it is therefore seen that Haokap, Chingsang, Khun-pham, Ngangcheung etc. who belonged to the so-called Old Kuki were an admixture of Lai and Khu, the tribe which was ruled by Hoomchouba the father of Lai-khu-rembi in their ancestral home in the area of the tri-juncture of India, Burma and Tibet long before their arrival in Imphal valley. Lai-khu-rembi was the first wife of king Thongaren. More details of Lai-khu-rembi and Lai tribes may be seen in the sections on Thongaren and Moirang respectively. In short this group of people was the amalgamated tribe Lai-Khu (Laikhu).

Besides Lai-Khu, it is probable that there were tribes like Yang-Khu, Pai-khu, Khun-khu etc. as some of old names of persons and of tribes of the Manipuri accounts indicate where Yang, Pai, Khun etc. were names of Tai tribes. The base of these group of people is Khu the Himalayan tribe whose ancestral home is said to be at Sawa in the aboved mentioned tri-juncture which the Manipuri accounts describe as *Sawa mi-Khu-roi* meaning Khu people of Sawa. When these group of mixed people were pressed

hard by the invasion of Ko-lo-feng and I-mou-sun in the above Tibetan regions they moved down the course of the Ningthi (Chindwin) river and settled scattered, shifting from one place to another as far as the southern Chin hills from the beginning of the 9th century A.D. Those who settled in the Chin hills got mixed with the Chin and other people of Mon origin from about the 13th century A.D. The appellation Kuki cannot be expected to exist earlier than the 15th century

## THE HANGOI, KHAROI AND NGANGOI

This group of neo-Tibetans or supposed Tibeto-Burmans entered Imphel Valley by more or less the same route with that of Poireiton from the hive of Tibeto-Burmans but they moved along the course of the river now known as the Thoubal river and settled somewhere near present Litan and south of it. These tribes then gradually moved towards the west of their settlement. Some groups particularly the Hangois appear to have come upto the river now known as the Iril river. The precise date of their arrival is not known but believed to be in the early part of the 9th century A.D., probably a little earlier than Poireiton. The river which is now called the Thoubal river had earlier assumed the name Hinoy-yi or Keisa-yi<sup>1</sup> probably given by these tribes.

Ningthourol Lambuba and other literary accounts refer to one girl named Konting Nurabi<sup>2</sup> who belonged to a Hangoi tribe. Hence she is also found to have been written as Hangoi Konting Nurabi. She is described to be a paramour of Nongta (Pakhangba). These sources however mystified the two characters as demi-gods who lived in the *Haye Chak* i.e. first millenium. Nongta Tukuplik is given the name *Leinung lonja* Pakhangba in these texts. The term *Leinung lonja* however means 'man belonging to Leinung tribe'. Since the name Pakhangba is given posthumously to Nongta in the 16th century A.D. we do not consider it at this stage. More details may be seen in subsequent sections. However there is indication that Konting Nurabi did not belong to the same tribe to which Nongta belonged. The remnants of the Hangoi tribes are still visible to this date. There is a place or rather a lake named *Hangoi pat* in the Upper Iril Valley to where the Hangoi tribes are supposed to have settled.

1. Ningthourol Lambuba, edited by O. Bhogeswar Singh, page-16.

2. *ibid*, page-7

Poireiton Khunthok refers to a man named Ngangoi Yoimongba, who belonged to a Ngangoi tribe. Ngangoi Yoimongba was a chief of the Ngangoi tribes and was also a prominent figure. It is stated that Ngangoi Yoimongba while clearing the course of a river possibly the upper course of the Thoubal river, met Poireiton while the latter came to settle on this land. Ngangoi Yoimongba first addressed Poireiton by the word *ichuma* meaning 'my friend', but, when the latter disclosed his identity, Yoimongba apologised and addressed him, *iyura*<sup>3</sup> meaning 'my lord the younger'. Both the words are of Himalayan origin, a dialect of the Sakyas possibly. Of these tribes the Ngangoi appears to be the most prominent one. There is a strong image of the Ngangoi on the Manipuri literature and culture. It seems in a later period the Ngangoi tribes amalgamated with the Kege-Moirang and the chiefs of this principality too occasionally passed on to the Ngangoi chiefs. Ngangois belonged to the so-called Nga tribe which the Manipuri chronicles describe as *Nga-nu* where as the Indian accounts refer to as *Linga*.

The appellation Thoubal is found to have associated with these tribes. The place of their settlement as well as the river flowing near their settlement are found to have been given the same name Thoubal. Literary accounts also frequently refer to a term *Thoubal Nungthou* meaning 'Thoubal chief'. It is most likely that the name Thoubal was originally the name of this group of Tibeto-Burmans. When all of them got merged with other tribes and became a constituent component of the Meitais the name remained applied to the river which was earlier called the Hinoy-yi or Keisa-yi. In a likewise manner, when the Khumans moved to the eastern side of the Loktak lake a name given by the Moirangs in the latter half of the 13th century A D, these tribes possibly moved along the course of the Hinoy-yi and settled in the area of present Thoubal town about 20 km to the south of Imphal city, and from the name of this tribe the name Thoubal came into existence. The said river

3. Poireiton Khunthok, published by the Manipuri Sahitya Parishad. page-58.

flows through different villages but none of them was given the name Thoubal.<sup>4</sup> Later the Thoubal area belonged to the Khumans. It may be mentioned here that Ningthourol Lambuba mentions an event which led to the development of the name Thoubal not the present Thoubal town. In the same text instances are found in which different events of different periods are given, naming a place by the same name. The name of a principality of a tribe is usually given the name of the tribe itself, and the chiefs of such principalities are also found to have been the same name e.g. Moirang Ningthou, Khuman Ningthou etc. Here Moirang, Khuman etc. stand for the tribe as well as the place. In a similar way we find Thoubal Ningthou. It is therefore most likely that Thoubal was the name of this group of supposed Tibeto-Burmans or neo-Tibetans.

As for Kharoi we find mainly of women belonging to the Kharoi tribes more particularly when they amalgamated with the Khumans. This is the reason why some women belonging to the Khumans are found to have been described as '*Kharoi-ron*' meaning 'parental home belonging to the Kharoi tribe' e.g. Kaireima the wife of Naophangba is found to have been described as *Thoubal Ningthou chanu Kharoi-ron Kaireima*.<sup>5</sup>

The Thoubal tribes are possibly one of the most culturally advanced groups of people arriving in this land besides Chakkha-Nung on the northern part of the valley. Words of their dialect are often found with the suffix *-rang* like *leirang* (flower), *pirang* (tear), *heirang* (fruit), *lairang* (weeds) etc. and are found to have been used in literary language of modern Meiteilon. The word *nura* meaning girl is also a Thoubal word and this too is used in literary language but not a spoken language. In some accounts of Manipur the above words are found to have been described as the words of Khuman-Nongyai which is perhaps due to the amalgamation or absorption of the Kharoi clan of this tribe in the Khuman-Nongyai.

4. Ningthourol Lambuba, edited by O. Bhogeswar Singh, page-15.

5. *ibid.*, page -16.

Heirang-goi a small beautiful evergreen coniferous tree with highly fruity but sour taste fruits of the size of cricket balls is perhaps brought by them to this valley in the time of their migration. They seem to be small in number but the image of their culture is evidently seen from the impact of their dialect on the Manipuri literature.

## THE HEIRONG, HEIREM AND KHUNJAN

Of the Heirong, Heirem and Khunjan tribes, Heirong is found to have been mentioned first, and for the first time the reference of this tribe in literary accounts is found during the period of Pakhangba. Laisa-ra (Laisna in modern style of writing) the wife of Pakhangba is said to have belonged to a Heirong tribe. She is said to be the daughter or descendant of the Heirong chief, Heirong Longliba Leitham Thamliba. The account Ningthourol Lambuba gives a very confusing name as '.... Heirong Longliba-na pokpi, Leichik Chiklibana pokpi, Leichik Chikliba Leitham Thamliba-na yenbi' meaning 'born by Heirong Longliba, born by Leichik Chikliba, begotten by Leichik Chikliba Leitham Thamliba'. However there is no confusion about Laisa-ra belonging to a Heirong tribe. It appears from the names of persons of Heirongs that their dialect was much influenced by other dialects particularly the Tibeto-Burman dialects. Both the accounts namely Ningthourol Lambuba and Cheitharol Kumbaba say that Laisa-ra came along with Poireiton in course of his migration to this land. Relying on this point of the chronicles, the Heirong tribes entered Imphal valley at about the beginning of 9th century A.D.

There is a legend of Pakhangba as found in both the above stated texts, in which Pakhangba is said to have ruled his country by becoming god in day-time and transforming into flesh and blood in the night time. This process of transformation aroused suspicion in the mind of his wife Laisa-ra about her husband's behaviour. She suspected Pakhangba of co-habiting with his paramour. So she said one day that she would like to become goddess in day time, and on the denial of the charges, her husband, Pakhangba replied, "You cannot become a goddess in day time as you came along with Poireiton in course of his migration to this land, but I can as I

came down from the heaven" This legend or fable is interpreted by different scholars in different ways in the last century Several anecdotes had been manufactured Thus Poireiton is made a contemporary figure of Pakhangba and in some manuscripts it is found that Poireiton and Pakhangba were made to fight a wrestling contest and quite incoherently Luwang Punshiba was made the judge of the contest, and so on Luwang Punshiba is said to be the fourth descendant of Poireiton. Some scholars interpreted Laisa-ra to be the younger sister of Poireiton This interpretation or conclusion seems to have been drawn from the account that the names of mothers of both of them are the same name i.e. Piyai-nu (Priya-nu). They were different persons belonging to different periods. Modern commentators on Cheitharol Kumbaba express their views on the text of the dialogue between Pakhangba and Laisa-ra as an indication of Pakhangba and Laisa-ra belonging to different ethnic tribes It may be noted that all Pakhangba legends began to develop from about the 16th century A.D. Besides the difference in the ethnic origin the dialogue also indicates a boasting of the tribe to which Pakhangba belonged, over other tribes It is a common experience that the superior tribes are usually attacked by inferior tribes in a hasty way but never to inferior tribes With the wave of Aryanisation or Hinduisation which is more appropriate for the periods, importance had been stressed on the Aryan tribes and Pakhangba is found again to have been projected as Aryan origin and therefore other tribes were being looked down as *Anarya*. The boasting of Pakhangba as Arya-putra is a misnomer It must be remembered that the Aryans were not the only tribe who got the light of civilization It is perhaps the Mongoloids and some other tribes got the light of civilization earlier than the Aryans

Pakhangba actually belonged to the Chakkha tribe born by a Leihou mother. More details may be seen in the section on Pakhangba. The Leihous were the ruling group of the neo-Tibetan who were later known as the Tangkhuls If Laisa-ra was somebody other than the neo-Tibetans, she then must have been a Tibeto-Burman



or a Tai. The associations of the name of Heirong and Heirem indicate that these two tribes were cognate tribes. Again Heirem is possibly a cognate tribe of Khunjan and they became merged into one unit and became known as Heirem-Khunjan. The Khunjans are definitely a Tai tribe. Thus the Heirongs were of Tai origin who got mixed with the neo-Tibetans and whose dialect had been greatly influenced by other dialects. Heirong may also be read as Heilong (Hei Long) like Tai Long indicating a Tai origin where Hci is said to be a Tai tribe. Heirongs first settled in the Upper Iril Valley. They possibly got merged with the tribe to which Pakhangba became their chief. Hei is also called Pai Sha-jen.<sup>2</sup>

As for the early period of the Heirems very little is known except when they merged with the Khunjans. The Heirems appear to have entered the valley somewhat later than the Khunjan. The Heirem seems to have settled near the Thoubal river somewhere in present Yaingangpokpi area. In the latter part of the 13th century A D the Heirems moved down the course of the Thoubal river along with Khunjans and settled in the outskirts of the new Khuman principality on the east of the Loktak lake. Since then they became known as Heirem-Khunjan. The Heirems also came by the same route as that of Poireiton. Tribes more or less of the same ethnic origin usually unite in those days. Heirem being a cognate tribe of Khunjan and therefore the Heirem was of Tai origin. There is also no impossibility of Hei-rem being an amalgamated tribe of *Hei*, a Tai tribe and *Lem* a Tibeto-Burman tribe who inhabited in eastern Burma.

In Ningthourol Lambuba it is mentioned that there was a place named Langcha Loupungphei<sup>3</sup> within the enclosure of the Upper Iril and the Thoubal river in the north eastern part of Imphal

2. George Scott and Hardiman's Gazetteer of Upper Burma and the Shan state part I Vol. I page-187-8, and also see Dr Gogoi's Tai and the Tai kingdom, page 2.
3. Ningthourol Lambuba, edited by O. Bhogeswar Singh, page-46.

Valley The name of the place is described to have been given in connection with the activities of two women in their paddy field, whose parental home belonged to the Thangnga-Kampong clan of the Man The emergence of the Thangnga and Kampong as separate clans of the Khuman is at a later period after this event when Khu and Man became amalgamated

Langcha Loupungphei was well demarcated. Ningthourol Lambuba refers to an episode of a quarrel between king Kangba and Huiyaibam Longchak<sup>4</sup> over the trespass of the cattle of Kangba in the *ingkhoh* (a dwelling spot) of the latter though it does not mention the quarrel explicitly. It is said that the house of Huiyaibam Longchak a 'quarrelsome' Khuman as the text mentions, was constructed very close to Langcha Loupungphei. By that time Langcha Loupungphei possibly became a grazing ground. The cattle of Kangba which usually came late to their sheds trespassed into the *ingkhoh* of Huiyaibam Longchak the quarrelsome Khunjan.

The Tai tribes were known by different names. Over two scores of names have been detected, of which names like Lungjen, Shajen, Pajen, Yujen, Nungjen etc. are found. The suffix *jen* means people in the Tai dialect, and thus *Lungjen* means Lung people, *Shajen* means Sha people and so on. The name Khunjan is probably a little phonetic variation of Khunjen and it therefore means Khun people. There was a Tai tribe which was called Khun or Hkun in Keng Tung in Burma<sup>5</sup>. These Khunjens are believed to have descended from Ngai Lao. Briggs says that these Khuns got mixed with the Karens and the aboriginal people of Siam or Cambodia who were tall and fair complexioned. K'ole feng the Nan Chao king expelled the Karens from Teru to Burma in 778 A.D. Thus it is seen that the Khuns cannot be expected to have come earlier than 778 A.D. to Imphal valley. They probably arrived in the valley at about 11th century A.D. or a little earlier as fugitives along with Funan, Maning, Mon-Khmer, Senbi etc.

4. *ibid.*, page-45.

5. Dr Gogoi, *Tai and the Tai kingdom*, page 22.

The dialect of the Khunjan also confirms their Tai origin. The Khunjan word for water is *tam*, for lotus plant is *tham* and probably for lotus is *thambal*. So present Manipuri word *thambal* for lotus is of Khunjan origin. Along with it words like *tham-la* (lotus leaf) later pronounced as *tham-na*, *tham-chet* (lotus seed) and *tham-bou* (lotus fibre) are also current to-day. There are place names like *Itam*, *Itham* in the Upper Iril and Thoubal Vallics once occupied by the Khunjans, and these words are mixed formations of Chakkha and Khunjan dialects where *i* means water in Chakkha dialect.

The amalgamated Heirem-Khunjan continued to preserve their distinct identity and independence for a long time in the area of the Khuman principality in the present Mayang-Imphal area upto the middle of the 14th century A.D. The Manipuri account Ningthourol Lambuba records the pressure of the Khunjans on the Khumans.<sup>7</sup> It is said that the Heirem-Khunjan encroached the areas of the Khumans and created provocative gestures. The Khuman chief Aton Punshiba was unable to face the challenge of the Heirem-Khunjan and requested his son-in-law Thawanthaba (c. 1353-56 A.D.) the Poirei king to help in crushing the Heirem-Khunjan. Accordingly Thawanthaba invaded the Heirem-Khunjan and destroyed them. Since then the independence and independent identity of the Heirem-Khunjan were lost. Most probably they were merged with the Khumans. It may be noted that the forged date of Thawantlaba as entered in Cheitharol Kumbaba is 1195-1231 A.D.

7. Ningthourol Lambuba ,edited by O. Bhogswar Singh, page-200.

## THE NONGBAL, NONGYAI AND NONGMAI

The first reference of the Nongbal tribe in the literary accounts of this land is found during the reign of Sameirang (c 1171-90 A D) in Cheitharol Kumbaba. Sameirang fought with Kwakpa Thawanthaba who according to the above text is found to have been described as Angom chieftain<sup>1</sup>. It may be noted that the appellation Angom came into existence in the 16th century A D. during the reign of Chulamba. Details may be seen in the section on Clan formation. So Kwakpa Thawanthaba must have been a person belonging to a tribe which became later known as the Angoms. Nongbal was the most prominent tribe besides Kang(ba) which constituted the Angoms. It will be quite reasonable to say that Kwakpa Thawanthaba belonged to a Nongbal tribe. In another occasion one Nongbal named Kadem a man of Uia Konthouba, is found to have been mentioned in Ningthourol Lambuba in connection with an episode. All these instances indicate that the Nongbal tribe came comparatively earlier than the period of Sameirang. The Nongbals of this period had good relations with the Poireis. It is estimated that they arrived on this land in the closing part of the 10th century A D or beginning of the 11th century A D and settled somewhere in the plains lying to the north of the Nongmaijung hill. We also come across a prominent man known as Kangba who belonged to the Kang tribe which later amalgamated with the Nongbals. The association of the Nongbals with the Poireis were mainly kept with the Khu Lei-Hou group of the Poireis. The suffix '-ba' is frequently found in the words and names of Nongbals. Again the word Nong of Nong-bal is the name of a Tai tribe. All these findings indicate

1. Cheitharol Kumbaba, published by the Manipuri Sahitya Parishad, page-3

2. Ningthourol Lambuba, edited by O. Bhogeswar Singh, page 15

the Nongbal belonged to a tribe closely resembling the mixed group of Poireis. Therefore we conclude that the Nongbals belonged to a Tibeto-Burman tribe of Tai origin. The chieftain of the Nongbals who led the tribe to this valley from their hive is perhaps Puleilomba.

The Nongbals came from the hive of Tibeto-Burmans in the north of the Hukong Valley through Sumra Tract to the source of the Thoubal River and finally settled in the above mentioned location. The Nongbals grew to political power by absorbing other tribes like Shelloy-Langmai, Nongmai besides Austro-Asiatic tribes like Funan, Maring, Khmer (Khamatan) etc.

No account of Nongyai is available till they became Khamans at a later period. Nongyai probably settled first to the east of Yaingangpokpi when they arrived on this land by about the beginning of the 11th century A.D. They then moved towards present Thoubal area and finally amalgamated with the Khamans. Since then they were known as Khaman-Nongyai. The Nongyai is a cognate tribe of Nongbal and as discussed above. Hence Nongyais also belonged to the Tibeto-Burmans. They possibly moved through present Nongdam, Nongdren, Andro and Yairipok. When they amalgamated with the Khamans the chieftainship of the amalgamated tribe was passed on to the Nongyais. Nongyai Thingkonhanba the father-in-law of the Poirei King Irengba (c. 1296-1310 A.D.), who belonged to a Nongyai tribe, is probably the first chief of the amalgamated Khaman-Nongyai.

Nongmai is also believed to be a sub-clan of the tribe to which Nongbal and Nongyai belonged. They got merged with the Nongbals. We have very little account of this tribe except that they settled on the hill which came to be known as the Nongmai-jing hill after the name of the tribe and functioned as the southern boundary limit of the Nongbals. Nongmais are frequently confused with the Langmais of the Shelloy-Langmai. Both of them are separate tribes. It is also discussed in the section on Shelloy-Langmai that the Langmais settled on the Langmai-jing a hill range now commonly known as the Mapao hills lying to the east of Kangla-tongbi and to the west of Sagolmang.

This group of Tibeto-Burmans is supposed to be a southwestern stream of the Tai immigrants who moved as far as Thailand and settled on the north of the Mekong river and to have mixed with Tibeto-Burman and other Asiatic tribes while sojourning in northern Burma by about the 8th century A. D. possibly after Ko-lo-feug.

## THE FUNAN, MARING AND MON-KHMER

Mons were a group of people whose original home is believed to be in central China but some scholars feel that they were people of the southern lower Himalayas.<sup>1</sup> They were not the aborigines of Thailand, Burma and Cambodia. The aborigines of Thailand and Cambodia were Lawas a fair complexioned and tall people, and curly-haired Negritos and wavy-haired Indonesians. The remnants of these latter two races are now represented by Semang and Sakai of Malay. The Funans mainly belonged to these latter two groups of people. There was another group of people who were known as Khmers. The Mons migrated to Burma possibly in the closing part of B C and from where they moved to Thaton and Siam in the early century of the Christian era. As the Mons and Khmers gave pressure on the earlier inhabitants, the aborigines moved away from their original home. Thus the Khmers occupied the whole of eastern Siam. Some scholars however feel that the Khmers are the aboriginal people of Cambodia.

It is said that one Kaundinya Brahmin from Java came to Cambodia and established the Funan kingdom in the first century A D. In course of time the Funan kingdom flourished and said to have extended the kingdom far and wide. Perhaps these Austro-Asiatic tribes moved as far as the coastal areas of Burma and Bengal in course of the expansion. The Funans, as observed by

1. Dr. Gogoi : Tai and the Tai kingdoms, page-141 foot note.

Some scholars hold that, "the tribal name 'Mon' is defined by Cosmo de Coros, in his Tibetan dictionary, as a general name for the hill people between the plains of India and Tibet. The Mon-pas of the southern lower Himalayan ranges are certainly these people. *Pa* means man or people ; Mon-pa means Mon people. These people are held to be connected with the Mon people of lower Burma (Rama Desha) and southern part of central Siam (Dvarvati) of ancient times, but it is doubtful"

Kang-Tai, a Chinese envoy, who visited the country during the period from 245 A. D. to 150 A.D., are ugly, black, frizzy-haired and naked' <sup>2</sup> This observation also confirms that the Funans were of Oceanic race. It is seen that the Funans occupied the southern parts of Siam and the Khmers occupied the northern and central portion of Siam, and the Mons occupied the western portion of Siam. In the 7th century A. D. the Khmers occupied a major area of Siam by expelling the Tai infiltrators. It is said that in 638 A.D. Phra Luwang liberated a portion of the Siamese territory from the Cambodian yoke. Thus he gave the name of the country *Thai* meaning 'free' <sup>3</sup> However, the kingdom established by Phra Luwang did not last long and it was then conquered by the king of Kiang-Tseu soon after his death.

In the meantime the Tai from Yun-nan penetrated into the Mekong valley from about the 9th century A. D. and several Tai cities were seen to have developed among the Mons and the Khmers. The Tai were getting momentum and pushed several tribes towards the east and west of Thailand. Thus the whole of Thailand was liberated from the Cambodian yoke by the 13th century A. D. As a result of the historical process there were mixing of population represented by a series of tribes like Mon-Khmer, Mon-Tai, Tai-Khmer, Mon-Funan, Funan-Tai etc along with other races like Lawas and their admixtures.

It is likely that some groups of Mon-Khmer, Mon-Tai, Mon-Funan etc moved towards the west and settled on the north of Thaton sometime in the 10th and 11th century A. D.

In the year 1044 A.D. the Burmese king Anawrahta ascended the throne after killing Sakkate in a duel. During his reign a Mon monk named Shin Arahan from Thaton visited Anawrahta's court. The king was much impressed by the personality of the monk and his profound knowledge of Buddhism. The king requested the Mon monk to convert the people to the right path. By that

2. *ibid.*, page-12.

3. *ibid.*, page-4



period the Burmese people were engulfed in a religion which was Buddhism 'strangled by various heathen growths and to become mingled with the debased Tantric system which is a mixture of black magic, witch craft and Siva worship'.<sup>4</sup> As an insult to injury the *Aris* dragged the people towards superstition. The preaching of Shin Arahan was opposed by the *Ari* priesthood. Anawrahta took drastic measures and 'unflocked the thirty *Ari* lords and their sixty thousand followers and enrolled them among his spearmen and lancers and elephant dung-sweepers'.<sup>5</sup> On the advice of the Mon monk king Anawrahta sent one of his ministers for one set of the Buddhist scripture *Tripitaka* to Mannoha the king of Thaton.<sup>6</sup> King Mannoha ill-received the minister and rejected the request. At this attitude king Anawrahta was offended and invaded Thaton in the year 1057 A. D. and occupied it. Anawrahta not only collected the Buddhist scriptures but moved almost the whole of Mon population of Thaton to Pagan. Along with the mass movement of Mons, he also brought the script which they used to write. The Burmese then adopted the Mon scripts and became a written language in the latter half of the 11th century A.D.

The Mon kingdom of Thaton in lower Burma appears to have flourished from the early Christian era. Thaton received Buddhism from Conjeevaram in South India in the fifth century A.D. Conjeevaram was a great South Indian centre of Hinayana school

4. *ibid.*, page-138.

5. *ibid.*, page-140.

6. Mannoha (Manohara), the king of Thaton who was defeated by the Pagan king Anawrahta in the year 1057 A. D., is said to be the 48th king since Siharaja the founder of Thaton. The line of succession is said to be an unbroken succession, and hence allotting an average ruling period of about 20 years for each of the ruler the period of Siharaja comes to about the second half of the 1st century A. D. Further the establishment of the Mon kingdom cannot be expected to be several centuries after their arrival. Hence the Mons must have arrived in lower Burma sometime in the 1st century A.D.

of Buddhism under Dharampala. It is said that two Buddhist missionaries namely Sona and Uttara visited the city Swarnabhumi, which is identified by some scholars as Pegu and Moulmein, during the reign of Jatakuma Siridhamasoka of Thaton in the 5th century A.D. Since the coming of Buddhism in Thaton, the Mon language became a written language with the adoption of the acquired Pallava script. Thus Thaton became a centre of Buddhist culture and learning. Thaton received the impact of Hinduisation before the wave of Buddhism but it did not flourish.

It is said that a Pyu prince from Prome visited the court of China in 802 A. D. Prior to king Anawrahta, like India, Burma was no country but it was congeries of petty principedoms of Pyu, Sakya, Barman, Mon, Shan, Kanran etc. In the Chinese account it is mentioned that in the 9th century A. D. Burma was a land of 'eighteen states and nine walled cities, all acknowledging the suzerainty of Pyu'.<sup>7</sup> The Pyus are believed to be of Tibetan origin and probably one of the earliest known inhabitants of Burma according to some scholars. Some scholars regard them to be the Indian Pandus.

Pyus are believed to be the Mongoloid inhabitants of Magadha or the foot-hills of the Himalayas who came to India from Tibet like the Sakyas before their coming to Burma and probably belonged to the horde of Dhaja Raja the Sakiyan king who came to Burma in the 3rd century A. D. It is very unlikely that they came from the north of Burma even if they were of Tibetan origin.

There were fightings among the neighbouring princes for supremacy, for plunder and even for personal reasons. The conditions continued up to the end of the 11th century A.D. By that time the population of Burma and the adjoining areas were very sparse and it could have been at the most one hundredth of what is found in the second half of the 20th century A. D.

7. Dr. Gogoi: *Tai and the Tai kingdom*, page 218.

This was the political condition at about the 10th century A.D. in south east Asia, particularly after the fall of the Nan Chao Empire which led movement of weaker groups of people towards the west. The movement from their new settlement to other places began from the latter part of the 8th century A.D. as a result of Ko-lo-feng's invasion and continued upto the 11th century A.D. as an effect of Anawrahta's mass movement of the Mon people, even though small movements are continuing to this date.

There is authentic record on the movement of these group of people from their homeland in Cambodia to the kingdom of Manipur. However, the following causes may be attributed to their movement. It is said that the period of 11th century A.D. was a period of civil war, strife, and revolts of the Khmers upto the time of Suryavarman I whose capital was at Ayothia. Normalcy was only restored by Suryavarman II (1113-50 A.D.) who founded the world famous Angkhor Vat. In addition to this turmoil, in the middle of the 11th century A.D. a severe cholera epidemic broke out at Lamp'un<sup>8</sup> about 25 km. to the south-east of Cheng-mai, which is supposed to be a Mon area. People had to desert their homes and flee en masse towards Thaton. It was then followed by the invasion of Anawrahta in 1057 A. D. as stated above. As a result of these happenings, these group of people had to move to the north-west, and finally they arrived in the Kingdom of Manipur.

The presence of Austro-Asiatic people in India specially in the North-east India who have to some extent preserved their identity, had been detected in the 11th century A.D. The Maring a cognate tribe of Mon possibly arrived in the second half of the 11th century A.D. As recorded in the Manipuri chronicle, Cheitharol Kumbaba, it is stated that Taothingmang (c. 1055-75 A.D.) the grandson of Nongta (Pakhangba) had a clash with a Funan chief who was a good archer. The account does not mention the name of the Funan chief. It is stated that while Taothingmang the

8. *ibid.*, page-218.

Poirei king was clearing the course of a river he entered the area acquired or claimed by the Funans as their territory. The Funans obstructed the work and soon there was a scuffle or clash between Taothingmang and the Funan chief. In that clash an arrow of the Funan chief pierced through the abdomen of Taothingmang. Viscera of Taothingmang is said to have been gushed out of the wounds. The place of the clash seems to be on the north of the Nongmajing hills and the river involved is probably the Lul river. These accounts suggest that these tribes must have arrived sometime earlier than the date of their detection. It may be mentioned here that the forged date of Taothingmang as entered in the said chronicle is 264 A D but the reconstructed date is c 1065 A.D. Details may be seen in the section on Tentative dates.

It may be noted that the Manipuri account Ningthourol Lambuba<sup>9</sup> mentions how the appellation Maring came into existence. It is stated that while Poireiton on his search for a good habitable land the Marems inhabiting the hills received him by burning an 'auspicious fire'. Since then these group of Marems were called *Mei-ling* or *Mei-ring* meaning 'fire-auspicious-burning'. And further states that the Poireis gradually changed *Mei-ling* to *Maring*, quoting the text which states, '*Nayuwa Chingkhong Poireito-na loibi sidaba hembra nadababu thirakpada mayim loibi Marem na chakmom khaambi mei-bu langna ngairamye Meiring-O koubabu Poirei tapha thibana Maring-O kouye*', meaning 'While your Lord Chingkhong Poireiton was searching for a hill or a place where there was no illness, the Marems inhabiting the hills received him by burning an auspicious fire. The Poireis deviated Meiring to Maring'. It may be noted that the word *Poirei-tapha thibana* is also found to have been punctuated as *Poirei-ta phathibaba* in other occasions in the same book. One difficulty in relying on this part of the text is that the arrival of Poireiton in Imphal valley is estimated to be about 810 A D and that of the Marings is about the 11th century A D. Moreover the editor of the text renders

9. Ningthourol Lambuba : edited by O. Bhogoswar Singh, page-179.

this visit of Poireiton as the second visit after he had already settled in the Imphal valley though main text does not mention it. Further the text also mentions the naming of a place called *Maring Khamtomya* to have been associated with the event in which all belongings of Poireiton were looted by the Man people living in the hills, quoting the text which states, '*Maring Khamtomya-O koubadi mayim loibi-Man-na Chingkhong Poireiton-gi maran mat-hum-bu mootna yanna yunle. Kkamtomya-O tounakouye*'. This indicates the Man, Marem and Maring were the same tribe.

The origin of the Man has already been discussed in the section on Poirei. The Man people who came down to southern China i.e. south of Yun-nan became active in the first half of the 9th century A.D. It is said that in 832 A.D. the Man people from Yun-nan invaded the Pyu kingdom in central Burma and destroyed the Pyu capital. They took three thousand Pys to captivity and exported them to Nan Chao. Hall feels that the Man people fought for Nan Chao. It seems the Man people had no separate kingdom of their own. Since they had no separate kingdom they are found to have been described as *Man rebels* in history. As a result of the attack of the Man rebels the Pyu kingdom came abruptly to an end. Thus the Man people from southern Yun-nan and northern Thailand cannot be expected to shelter in the inaccessible hills of Manipur prior to the middle of the 9th century A.D. They must have entered Manipur on some subsequent periods when they were subjected under the pressure of some alien forces.

It is also seen that a group of people belonging to Austro-Asiatic race like the Mon-Khmer speech family settled at one time on western Manipur and North Cachar hills before the Kabuis and the Kacharis occupied the area. Dr. J. H. Hutton, is of the opinion that there are "distinct traces of Mon-Khmer language in river and place names and there are words such as some for those of 'Taboo' which can be definitely linked up with Austro-Asiatic and Oceanic words. This taken with some aspects of megalithic culture, in particular that of the Kachcha Naga of the southwest Manipur

and north Cachar hills, with the occurrence, in one tribe at any rate, of a shouldered hoe of special Khasi pattern, with traditions and customs and legends strongly suggestive of a submerged matrilineal elements and some other elements of folklore both Naga and Meithei, suggest very strongly that a population of Mon-Khmer affinities has at one time occupied the area, or parts of the area, now occupied by the Naga tribe and is to some extent represented in the present population" <sup>10</sup>

The archeological finds and the history of North Cachar hills clearly prove that the Khasis before they were known as the Khasis occupied the North Cachar hills just before the coming of the Bodo Timacha or Timafcha who became later known as Kacharis or Tripuris. The Bodos came from the north and the north-east under the pressure of the Ahoms in the closing part of the 15th century A. D. and beginning of the 16th century A. D. These Austro-Asiatic and Oceanic tribes like the Mon-Khmer, Funan and Siamese Tai were forced by the Kacharis to the north-west. As a result of the Kachari pressure these group of people moved towards present Meghalaya and later founded their principalities. The Hindus gave the name *Jayantiya* to these Mon-Khmer, Tai and other Oceanic people. With the growing of power, they became rivals with the Kacharis. In 1605 A.D. one king of Jayantiya named Dhanamanika became a captive of the Kachari king named Narayan. Dhanamanika was tortured and at last castrated in the capital of the Kachari king. Castration or castrated animal in the dialect of the courtiers of the Kachari king was called *Khasi*. Dhanamanika was called by them *Khasi*, and since then his tribe i.e. the tribe to which Dhanamanika belonged became known as *Khasi*<sup>11</sup>. The capital of the Kachari king to where Dhanamanika was castrated became since that event known as Khas-pur.

The stone celts which were brought by these Austro-Asiatic and Oceanic people are still found in hundreds in Imphal valley

10. J.H. Hutton: The mixed culture of the Naga tribes.

11. Dr. Gogoi: Tai and the Tai kingdom, page-333; see also Jayantiya Burunj, page-III.

possessed by the Meiteis in particular. The materials from which these stone celts were made are, generally not locally available either in Imphal valley, or its adjacent hills. This area is a Tertiary rock. The possessors of the stone celts actually do not know that they were the stone implements once used by cavemen ancestors who are technically known as neolithic people. The Meiteis took these stone celts as 'thunder bolts' which struck the earth in a lightning discharge and called it *Nongmeishingjang* meaning 'rain-fire-axe'. Some Meiteis of this electronic age still believe these stone celts resembling an axe in particular has magical power. They believe it could relieve pain. Thus superstitious local Meitei Maiba or Kabiraja even of the early 20th century A.D. used to rub the stone celts on a piece of flat stone slab with water and the resulting paste was smeared on to the forehead or the parts where there was *khoirai* a severe headache of migraine origin believing that would cure the pain. But, owing to its repeated failure of magical power it has generally been discarded, however they still preserve them. Thus such stone celts are found to have been possessed even by respectable families. Some hill people living in Manipur believe these stone celts have magical power of fertility. Different shapes of stone celts are found here. They were used by the stone age ancestors for different purposes as hammers, as tools for flaying birds and animals.

Even a myth has been developed in Manipur as regards the stone celts. There is a family title named *Soren-sangbam* who is said to be a worshiper of the Sky-god *Sararen*, who usually offer some axes made of clay every year to *Sararen*. The sky-god would take the offer and release them in lightning discharges that would strike the earth. This practice and belief seem to be dead now.

There is a historical evidence that the Austro-Asiatic and Oceanic people brought with them these stone celts at the time of their migration to India. They also possibly did not remember that these stone implements were once used by their stone age ancestors. The Manipuri account, Ningthourol Lambuba mentions that Loi-yumba (c. 1310-36 A.D.) led an expedition at Thangdapung near present Thangal village in the northern part of Manipur. In that

assault he met a group of people who, as the text states, "*samchetpa ukaba hangyengbi hangyngba tanba yonghakpa namu pongabi*" which literary means 'frizzy haired people looked like monkey' and according to the editor, looked like *yongmu yongsei*<sup>12</sup> meaning 'black monkey'. He defeated these group of people and seized 'valuable stones' which they claimed to have magical power from their possession. The people of Porei had no name of these dark skinned, frizzy haired and probably ugly people. The Poreis called other dark skinned people of Indian origin as Pangals (Bangals). The Poreis were already well acquainted with the Bangals and proto Bangals by that period. It is said that Nongyai Thingkhonhanba the Khuman chief had already subdued the village named Mara inhabited by Bangals. It is therefore clearly seen that these frizzy haired *yongmu yongsei* people were not Bangals or proto Bangals. The anthropological definitions of the Funans agree with the descriptions of these group of people. It is therefore seen that these group of people were none but the Funans and the valuable stones possessed by them were stone celts. These Funans also did not remember these stone celts were once used by their stone age ancestors as tools. They were not stone age people. It would be wrong to assume either the possessors of stone celts as stone age people or the site where these people once inhabited as the site where the stone age people lived. It will be more scientific to examine who were the last possessors of these stone implements and from where they came. No doubt these stone implements were brought from Cambodia or the like. It is therefore possible to detect some remnants of Haobinhean culture, a culture that flourished long before Christ near present Hanoi, in the areas of western Manipur and eastern part of Imphal valley.

The encounter with the Funans and Loiyumba might have been in the former's quest for better habitable lands. In such pursuits they moved to settle in Imphal valley where they came in contact with the Poreis at Thangdapung.

12 Nangthourol Lambuba edited by O Bhogeswai Singh, pages 81.



Again Mrs. Ursula Graham Bower,<sup>13</sup> in her researches in the Barail ranges of the North Cachar hills reveals that there were caves, fortifications and villages of vanquished people called *Siemi* (better spelling should have been *Siem-mi*). *Siem* is a Khmer word for Siam and *mi* is a Tibeto-Burman word for man or people. Thus the word *Siemi* means 'people of Siam'. When Mrs. Bower enquired, she was told that the Kachari kings vanquished those *Siemis* in those caves. All these facts clearly indicate that the people of Siam once occupied the north-western parts of Manipur and adjoining areas of North Cachar hills.

As discussed above *Siem* is a Khmer word for Siam and *Siemi* (*Siem-mi*) means people of Siam, it may mentioned here that the name Siam came into existence from the 9th or 10th century A.D. "These Tai people were living in the hills in southern Yun-nan before getting down to the fertile plains of the Mekong and Menam rivers. Most of these people had to seek shelter in the hills leaving their homes in the rich plains of Sze-Chuan, Yun-nan and Kwei-chow as early as the third century A. D. when general Chuko-Liang of the Han invaded Yun-nan, apparently to put down a rebellion. The last greatest exodus of these people to the south was when in the middle of the 13th century A.D. the Mongols under Kublai Khan swept down to south China. It seems therefore the appellation Shan (or Sham), Sam, Siem, Syam or Siam were used from about the 9th or 10th century A. D. by the different people in referring to the Tai immigrants from the southern highlands of Yun-nan. But the name Siam became prominent in history only in the 13th century A.D. which is also Sukhodaya period".<sup>14</sup>

"L. Hoontrakul points out that King Khun Shri Indrajit of Sawankhalok moved southwards and built a capital called Sukhat'ai and established a kingdom called Siam".<sup>15</sup>

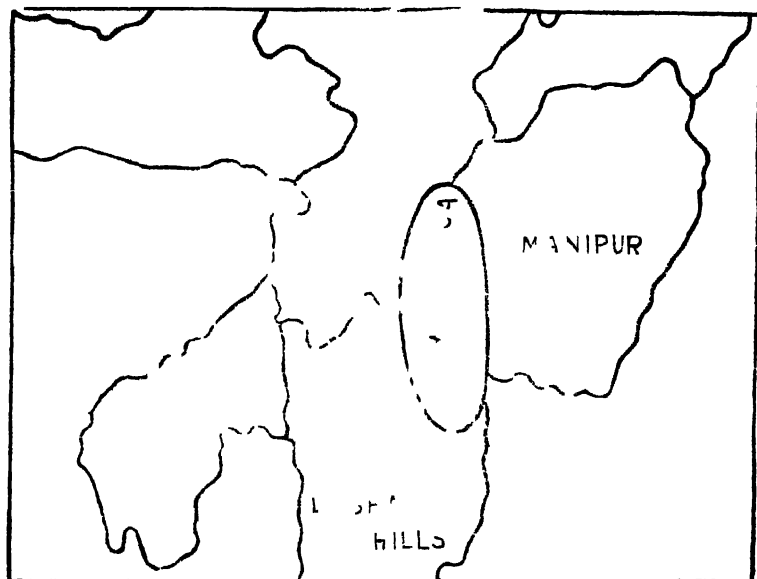
13. P.C. Choudhury : History of Civilization of the people of Assam, page-55.

14. Dr. Gogoi : The Tai and the Tai kingdoms, page-15.

15. *ibid.*, page-16<sup>e</sup> foot note.

Relying on these accounts or investigations, it is seen that *Siems* cannot at any rate be present in north Cachar and Manipur West before the 9th or 10th century A D.

The presence of Cambodian tribes in the western regions of present Manipur is also supported by the Tibetan account "The late Tibetan chronicle *Pag Sam Jon Zang* locates a country called Kam-po-tsa ( Kamboja ) in the Upper and Eastern Lushai Hills tracts lying between Burma and Bengal, and Dr H C Ray is inclined to the view that the Kambajas came from this region".<sup>16</sup>



**Kamboja Desh of the Tibetan account.**

It is also stated that the Kambojas invaded Bengal in the first half of the 10th century A D during the reign of Narayanpala the Pala king of Bengal. About the location of the country of these Kambojas different scholars give different versions. Some say it was in the Himalayas or Tibet. The possibility of these Kambojas

16. History of Bengal, Vol I, edited by Dr. R C. Marumdar, page 19 .

from Kamboja-desa, modern Cambodia in Indo-China is also suggested by Dr. B. R. Bannerjes. It is said that Rajyapala of Irda copper plate is identified by some scholars as Rajyapala (c 908 A.D. the date of ascension) of the Palas of Bengal. "There is a sharp difference of opinion among scholars regarding the identity of the king of Rajyapala of Irda copper plate and the well known Pala king of that name. Mr. N. G. Mazumdar who edited the copper plate, regarded it as quite unlikely that the two Rajyapalas were identical, but subsequently changed his opinion and held the identity as almost certain".<sup>17</sup> The mother of Rajyapala of Irda copper plate is interpreted to have belonged to a Kamboja tribe. "Besides we should remember that the Palas had no uniform tradition about their lineage, and none of their records, upto the time of Rajyapala, refers in any way to the dynasty to which they belonged. If, therefore, we suppose that Rajyapala's mother belonged to a Kamboja family, we can easily explain the epithet *Kamboja-kula-tilaka* (the ornament of the Kamboja family) applied to Rajyapala of the Irda copper plate".<sup>18</sup> "The Dinajpur Pillar inscriptions refer to the ruler of Gauda king of Kamboja lineage and on palaeographic considerations it has to be referred to the tenth century A.D."<sup>19</sup> All these accounts suggest that some of these Pala kings themselves were Kambojas who assumed the Pala names or adopted the Indo-Aryan speech, and they were found active in Bengal in the tenth century A. D. It seems these Kambojas were the earliest batch of the second wave of Cambodian tribes arriving India. The inundation of Cambodian tribes seems to have been stopped from about the 12th century A.D. The maximum Austric elements of Bengal may be attributed to this period.

The inundation of some un-pecified Austric people as peaceful settlers in other parts of Imphal valley is also suggested by some

17. *ibid*, page-90.

18. *ibid.*, page -90.

19. *ibid.*, page-191.

place names on the western side of Imphal valley near Nambol like Kha-Jiri and Awang-Jiri where the word *Jiri* is believed to be an Austric formation like the Loi-Jiri hills in Northern Burma, Jiri and the Jiri river in the Jiribam sub-division of Manipur west. Their settlement in Imphal valley cannot be expected to be much earlier than the 14th century A.D. The number of this group of Austric speakers also cannot be very high as the impact of their dialect on Meiteilon or Manipuri language is very feeble. So far some Austric words have been detected in Manipuri language. They are *shing* meaning 'ginger' originating from the Austric word *shringavera*, and *tambula* meaning 'betel vine' in Austric but adopted with a slightly different application. It is used to mean the mouthful pack of betel nut and leaf. The word *bhelandi* meaning 'ladies finger' seems to be an Austric formation.

Besides, the place names mentioned earlier, we find in the south-western parts of Manipur place names like *Jiri*, *Dibong*, *Tiparmukh* and *Jirimukh* in the Jiribam sub-division of Manipur. These areas are in continuity with the Upper and Eastern tracts of Lushai Hills as mentioned in the Tibetan account. These names are believed to be Austric or mixed formations, but for the word *Dibong* there is no impossibility of being formed by compounding the Bodo word *di* meaning 'water' and the Austric word *bong* meaning 'mouth'. In Austric formation we find words like *le-bong* meaning 'sea' *nambong* meaning 'cavity' etc. However it is very unlikely that the prefix *di* in *Dibong* to be a Kachari Boro word since the Kachari Bodos from upper Assam became active around that area only by about the 15th century A.D., no doubt there were several Tibeto-Burman tribes of Bodo origin who came along the course of the Chindwin river to that area. It seems these group of Tibeto-Burmans of Bodo origin arrived in that area in the 11th century A.D.

It is also suggested by some scholars that the name *Surma* given to the lower course of the Barak river is a mixed formation of Bodo and Austric words. The word *sor* is an Austric formation meaning 'to crawl like a snake' and suffix *ma* a Bodo word indicating biggishness. If it be true then the name *Surma* must have

been born in the 15th century A. D. However nothing is definitely known in this regard. It is also said that the real pronunciation of Sylhet a town in eastern Bengal is Siri-Hatta and its earlier name is Hari-kela. The existence of the name Hari-kela is perhaps from about the period when the Pala dynasty was ruling western Bengal at about the 10th century A.D. But some scholars suggest its existence from about the 7th century A. D. The word Hari-kela seems to be a mixed formation of Indian and Austric. Most of the Austric people who sojourned in the south-west Manipur and north-east Lushai Hills possibly moved towards the Surma valley from about the 11th century A. D. and mixed with the earlier inhabitants there and became the population of Bengal.

In Upper Assam we find place names like Dibrugarh, Digboi, Dimapur, Diphu etc. and river names like Di-khu, Di-hong, Di-yang, Di-soi etc. These names are suggested by some scholars to be a mixed formation of Bodo and Austric words. It is almost certain that the names were not given simultaneously by the Bodo and Austric people and perhaps that one word existed earlier. We take the word Di-hong, of which *di* is said to be a Bodo word and *hong* an Austric word. So the name of the river must have been earlier Di or Hong and when the latter immigrants arrived they had either Hong or Di respectively. Any way we do not get the reverse words of the above something like Hong-di, Soi-di, Yang-di Khu-di etc. The tendency of the Tibeto-Burmans is that they usually add the latter word in suffix forms, say, Kham-Nung, Khu-Man where Nung and Man came later to the Kham and Khu inhabited areas, and in words like *sumang-thelong*, *wanglen-pungja*, *chingU-lai*, *khoimom-lairenbi*, *khaari-loupuk* etc. where the suffixes were the latter arrivals. Again, the suffix *-mukh* in place names or rather the junction names of rivers like Tipai-mukh and Jiri-mukh in Manipur, Chapra-mukh and Jamuna-mukh in Assam, is of Cambodian origin. These names clearly indicate that the presence of the Cambodian tribes in the above stated areas was definitely after the existence of the names like Tipai, Jamuna etc. Since the word Tipai is of Marem origin,

it can exist only when the Marems were active in that area about the 12th century A.D. Hence the presence of the Cambodian tribes in that area cannot be expected to be much earlier than the 12th century A.D. and the Marems were the earlier settlers. These investigations further reveal that the date of the Tibetan account *Pag Sam Jong Zang* is of about the 12th century A.D. or later.

These facts clearly suggest that the earlier word, say, for *Di-hong* is *Di* and *hong* a latter arrival. So the conclusion would be that the whose earliest inhabitants of Upper Assam is Bodo a Tibeto-Burman tribe ancestral home seems to be in some south-eastern parts of Tibet from where they moved to Upper Assam about the closing part of the 8th century A.D., and beginning of the 9th century A.D., a period when the Tibeto-Burmans from their hive began to disperse under political pressure as discussed in other sections. The next immigrants arriving Upper Assam were the Austric people like Mon, Khmer, Funan etc. who moved through the territory of the ancient kingdom of Manipur and present Nagaland at about the 10th or 11th century A.D. and some of them got mixed with the Bodos. It is very likely that by about the 12th century A.D. some of the Himalayan tribes who were Aryanised moved from Lower Assam to Upper Assam of which *Kali* or *Kali-ta* may be mentioned. The *Kali* tribes were one of the components of the amalgamated tribe *Kali-Nga* (Kalinga). The Bodos of Upper Assam began to move gradually towards lower Assam. The Koch were perhaps Bodos with Austric people whereas the Garos another group of Bodos probably mixed with the Funans. The Bodos who settled on the northern side of the Brahmaputra moved as far as Cooch-Bihar and Bengal and those who settle on the southern side of the Brahmaputra moved towards North Cachar, Tripura and the Garo Hills, and moved as far west till they reached the natural barrier of the big Brahmaputra river. It is probable that these groups of Bodo who moved as far as the Garo Hills got mixed with the Funans who were the earlier settlers arriving in that area via western Manipur at about the 15th century A.D. resulting the so-called Garos. The appellation Garo seems to have derived from

the Indo-Aryan word *Kalo* given by the speakers of the Indo-Aryan dialects to mean their darker complexion. On the other hand the lower Assam became inhabited by Aryanised Himalayan Mongoloids from about the 5th century A.D. It is claimed that Pushyavarman founded a kingdom at Kamarupa at about 400 A.D.

It is obvious from the above analysis that the Austro-Asiatic and other Oceanic people came from their original homeland in Cambodia and moved towards India after sojourning here and there, and arrived at about the middle of the 11th century A.D. They settled on the western part of Manipur now occupied by a Tibeto-Burman tribe known as Kabui. It is most likely that some groups of Funans, Marings and Siam-mis moved towards a more northerly route and entered Imphal valley by an easterly direction, while some other groups mainly Mon-Khmer, Funan and Siam-mi too moved by a more westerly route and arrived in the western part of Manipur by about the same time i.e. at about the 11th century A.D. possibly a little later than 1057 A.D. as a sequence of Anawrahta's invasion of Thaton in the year 1057 A.D. There is every likelihood of the inundation of the Cambodian tribes into Manipur began from about 10th century A.D. Some Mons are believed to have moved further northwards and settled in Nagaland are now called Nagas. The major chunk of the Funan-Maring who settled in Imphal valley became merged with other tribes and later became Meiteis. However some Marings who continued to stay on the hills remained as Marings preserving their culture and identity. But the younger generations have intermarriages with the Tangkhuls and other neo-Tibetan tribes, and shortly a new sub-tribe is on the offing.

In case of the Mon-Khmer-Funan-Tai group who settled on the western part of Manipur, were subjected under the pressure of Tibeto-Burman immigrants particularly the Kabuis besides Marem, Thangnang, Mayang etc. from about the beginning of the 13th century A.D. The Kabuis are believed to be a cognate tribe of Kachin, Karen, Kapaw etc. Since the settlement of these Austro-Asiatic and Oceanic people was far away in inaccessible areas

from Imphal valley, the inhabitants of Imphal valley had no contact with them before their moving out of the territory of Manipur by about the 15th century A.D. except in one occasion as stated earlier.

The probable course of movement of these tribes may be summarized as follows. They were forced out of Cambodia by political upheavals and other natural calamities and they moved towards the west passing through the dry land areas of central Burma. From where one stream of them moved northwards along the Kabow valley and entered present Nagaland and Assam.

While other groups moved towards the western part of Manipur and settled there for about three centuries shifting their habitat from one place to another. In course of their sojourn in western Manipur they had contact with new Tibeto-Burman immigrants. Thus the present Kacha Naga of Tamenglong area resulted in mixing with Oceanic elements as observed by J H Hutton as stated above. With increasing pressure of other Tibeto-Burmans and the defeat of the Funans on the hands of the Poireis, these group of people moved further north and probably left the territory of Manipur by about the 15th century A.D. and settled in *Hablóng* (Haflong) in the North Cachar hills.

The place names with the suffix *-long* are associated with these Funan Mon-Khmer-Tai group of people. In western Manipur where they are believed to have settled are found names of places like *Siva-long*, *Oinam-long*, *Kambi-long*, *Phe-long* etc. It may also be pointed out that Meng and Hmeng are tribes of Mon origin. Thus they shifted their settlement from one place to another successively occupying their earlier positions by other Tibeto-Burmans. From *Haf-long* they shifted to *Shi-long* (Shillong). The word *long* has different meanings in different dialects. In Mau Shan it means 'great' like *Tai-long* meaning 'great Tai'. It is not known what would have been in the old dialect of these group of people. In Meiteilon or Manipuri language *long* means tableland like *the-long* and a kind of fishing net made of bamboo pieces. In addition



to this suffix another prefix is also found which possibly Funan-Maring-Siemmi origin. It is the prefix *Nong*. In Meghalaya there are several places having the name with the prefix *Nong* like *Nong-po*, *Nong-khe*, *Nong-stron*, *Nong-pau* etc. Such similar place names are also found in Imphal valley where the Funan-Maring-Siemmi once settled or occupied like *Nong-dam*, *Nong-dren* etc. In these areas we also find place names with the suffix *-long* like *Lilong* on the meeting point of the Iril and Imphal rivers, and *Khalong* on the highest peak of the Nongmaiching hills. In modern Manipuri *nong* means rain or day ; and in Mau Shan it means lake like Nong-yang lake in northern Burma.

The dialect of the Funans is untraceable from Manipuri source, but the Marings being a living tribe their dialect is traceable. The dialect of the Marings appears to be a mixed dialect of Mon and Ngailao particularly its cognate tribe Shenlao. It is a soft sounded dialect compare with that of the Mon-Khmer speech. Details may be seen in the chapter on Meiteilon or Manipuri language. The Marings were a comparatively cultured group of people by the time when they settle in Manipur. They probably conceived a localised Brahmanical faith mixed with Buddhism which in turn mixed with Tantric cult. Some Marings became Meiteis, while those who did not like to get mixed with other tribes, who liked to preserve their distinct identity probably continued to stay on the hills and remained segregated from other tribes. The course of history has changed and by now they remain as backward schedule tribe unable to join the race of progress. The culture of early Marings is proved by proverb of the Meiteis even to this date which runs thus : '*Maring-na saba sangbai nama hangbara*' ? meaning 'Maring-made-basket-single-empty is it' ? However the literal meaning is 'Men and women will not live single, one day they will meet their halves'.

It will be seen in the section on Religion also that there is a place called *Sita* on the Maring hills. The Ramayana legends were very popular in Cambodia before the coming of the Tai. It continued to be popular even with the Tai immigrants. The Cambodians

used to give names of places associated with the Ramayana legends like Ayothia (Ayodhya). The Marings gave the name *Sita* to a place on their hills which according to their traditions had a footprint of Sita the wife of Rama, on a huge rock. This type of naming place names is a Cambodian culture.

The Cambodian tribes like Funan, Maring, Senbi etc. who settled on the eastern part of Imphal valley at Nongdam, Nongdren, Lilong, Nongmaiching hills etc. brought with them Brahmanism from Cambodia. They worshipped Siva and the shrine of Siva on the Nongmaiching hills near Khalong which is now known as the Varuni Mahadeva was installed by these tribes. When these tribes got merged with the Nongbals the myth of Siva and Paravati was recasted with local names and materials. Nongpok the supposed ancestor of the Nongbals is depicted to be the Siva and another fictitious lady Panthoibi from the Tai pantheon substituted Paravati of the myth. The legends of Nongpok and Panthoibi became very popular among the Nongbal clan constituted by some nine or ten prominent tribes like Kaug, Kong, Langmai, Nongmai, Funan, Maring, Mon-Khmer, Senbi etc. before it assumed the new appellation Angom during the reign of Chhalamba. In short the religion of the Nongbals in the 13th century A. D. was a vernacularised Saivism.

It may be mentioned here that this wave of Cambodian tribes is perhaps the second major wave since the earlier wave of these tribes possibly in early Christian era that came to India. Some scholars are of the opinion that these Cambodian tribes came to India in the first millenium B.C. "The date when the Austric speakers began to filter in Assam is not known, but it must have been several hundred years B.C. and certainly long anterior to the advent of the Aryans from the west."<sup>20</sup> It is more likely after the invasion of Cambodia by Kaundinya Brahmin from Java in the first century A.D. that these Austric speakers

20. B.K. Barua : A cultural history of Assam, page-6.

dispersed to the west as far as Bay of Bengal.\*<sup>1</sup> It is said that the invasion of Kaundinya Brahmin was a part of a great movement of population. The Funan empire of Cambodia established by Kaundinya Brahmin is said to have spread in the first century A.D. from Annam to Bay of Bengal. The base layer of the population of Bengal is to this date believed to be of Austro-Asiatic people followed by waves of Dravidians from the west superimposed by other layers of Bodo and other Tibeto-Burmans before the Indo-Aryan immigrants mixed with them \*\* The coming of Cambodian or Austro-Asiatic tribes does not represent a long gap with that of Tibeto-Burmans. The dialect or the Tibeto-Burman language is said to have been fully characterised by about the 7th century A.D. It may be mentioned here that the Nan Chao account does not mention the presence of Austro-Asiatic tribes in the 8th century A.D. when Ko-lo-feng invaded Assam if he came to Kamarupa at all, nor the Chinese accounts mention any Oceanic tribe in the route to India via Assam (Kamarupa) except some Himalayan and

21 The so called Austro Asiatic speaker is thought to have originated from a part of Asia near the Malaya Peninsula, and later migrated west as far as Madagascar and east to the Pacific islands of the equatorial belt, well over two thousand years ago, now represented by Malaysian, Melanesian, Micronesian, Polynesian etc. inhabiting Java, Sumatra, Philippine etc. to the Hawaiian islands. There has been suggestions that the Malayo-Polynesian languages form a single Austro family, but it has not been proved. Anyway the Malayo-Polynesian languages perhaps belonged to a family and do not seem to have related to any other language family. Sporadic dispersal of these groups into the Indian mainland is the reason why some similar word formations in some Indian dialects to that of the Hawaiian language are found. There are hundreds of dialects belonging to the Malayo-Polynesian family of language developed or rather born from a single stock due to isolation and lack of communications among themselves in those islands.

22. "Before the establishment of Aryan speech and during the time it was spreading in the province (Bengal), we may quite reasonably expect that the different Austro, Dravidians and other Tibeto-Burman tribes had songs and tales, all preserved orally in their Mon-Khmer, Kol, Dravidian and other dialects". History of Bengal, Vol. I, edited by R C Mazumdar, page-376.

Tibeto-Burman tribes. It is therefore more probable that the Austric elements believed to be a base stratum of Upper Assam are of the second wave in the 11th century A.D. who infiltrated through Nagaland and Upper Assam. On the other hand, in lower Assam the place names believed to be of Austric origin were perhaps given by the Austro-Asiatic elements and Aryanised Mongoloid who entered Assam from the northern parts of Bengal. The place names like Kamata, Kamakhya, Pragjotipura are considered to be of Sanskritised Austric formations. It may be noted that the Khmers were also called Khamaran by the Poireis besides the people of Ava who were not of Tai origin.

Mizo of Lu-shai hills now called Mizo-ram are supposed to be people of Mon origin who were called Mios by the Shans or Miostze by the Chinese. They were very early offshoots of a proto-Sino-Tibetan speaking race of people arriving eastern Burma by about the 6th century A.D. Man, Maring and Marem found in accounts of Manipur are their cognate tribes whose arrival in the kingdom of Manipur is estimated to be about the 11th or 12th century A.D. as discussed above. On the otherhand the Mizo began to penetrate into the Indian zone from the Chin hills and its adjoining areas from about the 17th century A.D. The Hmeng and Meng are also their cognate tribes. In the dialect of Marem as found in Manipuri accounts land is called *ram* with a short 'a'. So the name Mizo-ram means Mizo-land like Moi-ram as discussed earlier.

## THE KEGE AND SENBI-KABOW

The first reference of the Keges is found during the reign of the Poirei king Khongtekcha (c. 1250-60 A.D.) in Manipuri account. It is stated that the Keges attacked the Poireis sometime in the latter part of the above-mentioned date during the reign of king Khongtekcha. This is the first and earliest reference of the Keges as recorded in literary accounts so far available. In this attack or raid the Keges were defeated and several of them were killed by Thongak Lakpicha<sup>1</sup> a Mangang Hao who was an able general of the Poireis. According to Ningthourol Lambuba<sup>2</sup> the number of Keges killed in that engagement is 763 at a place which became known since that event as Kege-Loutangkha, but Cheitharol Kumbaba<sup>3</sup> records the figure as 63 only. There is also a difference in the name of the tribe in the two texts. Cheitharol Kumbaba describes the tribe as Moirang while the other text describes as Kege. In the middle of the 13th century A.D. during the reign of Khongtekcha the Moirangs had not yet settled in the valley. When the Moirangs settled and carved out a principality by amalgamating with the Keges at about 1270 A.D., the principality became known as Kege-Moirang principality. Later the name Kege is found to have been dropped. The printed Cheitharol Kumbaba available with us at present was re-written during the period 1825-35 A.D. with forged dates and the scholars wrote the tribe as Moirang. The reference of Kege in the above clash is appropriate, and the reference of Moirang at this stage is wrong and misleading. The Keges are believed to have settled near present Ithai and expanded later upto Ngangkha-rawai. It is stated in Moirang Ningthourol

1. Ningthourol Lambuba, edited by O. Bhogeswar Singh, page-46.
2. *ibid.*, page-46.
3. Cheitharol Kumbaba, published by the Manipuri Sahitya Parishad. page-3.

Lambuba that, while the Moirangs were moving down to settle on the valley, they were received by Haomuba<sup>4</sup> son of a lady named Irai Leima, who belonged to a Kege tribe, indicating an invitation of the Moirangs by the Keges. It may be noted that the people of Moriya principality was known as Keges to the Poireis, which included Moriya, Tibeto-Burman Mayang besides Kege proper. The attack of the Keges as stated above is believed to have been after destroying the Bangal principality of Lamangdong which was close to them. More details may be seen in the section on Bangal. By that period the Poirei principality was on the northern part of Imphal Valley. The Bangal principality of Lamangdong seems to be an ally of the Poireis. Since the defeat in the hands of the Poireis, the Keges appear to have concentrated towards Ithai a more strategic location situated on the south of the lake now known as the Loktak lake.

The period of the presence of the Kege in the Imphal valley is to be about 1100 A.D. or somewhat earlier. They were inhabitants of Moriya (Kabow valley proper). They penetrated gradually into Imphal valley from the south east. The Keges moved towards Imphal valley due to an impact of mass cross-human movements mainly of Cambodian tribe towards west and north-west possibly following the invasion of Thaton by Anawrahta in 1057 A.D. and other calamities.

The name Kege is a modern pronunciation, the earlier pronunciation is Keko. The Bangals of the Lamangdong principality perhaps pronounced it Kika. The Keges started mixing with other tribes of the valley from the latter part of the 13th century A.D. At a later period the Keges got totally amalgamated with the Moirangs.

We have very limited information about their dialect except some names of persons like Maleicha Ngarel-su, Khoiba Nashipha etc. These names are similar to that of tribes of Chinese origin of Yun-nan. A very typical word used by this tribe in their names either borrowed or their own is the suffix *-su*. Some names of Poirei

4. Moirang Ningthourol Lambuba, edited by O. Bhogeswar Singh, page-5.

queens are found to have the names with the above suffix. The queen of Ura Konthouba (c. 1190-1215 A.D.) is found to be called Nongjeng-su. It may be noted that some scholars interpret the meaning of this suffix as 'grand-daughter'. This suffix is also found to have been adopted by some Chinese tribes which constituted the Chinese nationality. The name of the Chinese officer of Nan Chao of about 900 A. D. is found to be one Chengmai-su<sup>5</sup>. The Chinese nationality had several elements of which the tribes of the state of Chin which was one of the five confederating states before the birth of the Chinese nation, may be mentioned. It is believed that Chengmai-su belonged to the tribe of Chin. Thus it is seen that there are Chin elements among the Keges.

Silk culture and rearing of silk-worms, more particularly the *Kege-teel* (Kege-worm) and the *Kege* plants for feeding Kege-worms were brought and introduced into this land by the Keges. It is generally an accepted view that silk culture started from China<sup>6</sup>. These people of Chinese origin brought the culture first to Moriya and then to Imphal valley. The Yun-nan people of Chinese origin are known by various names like, Khe, Keke, Ki, Kika, Tarop etc. The Tai particularly the Mau Shan called them Khe, the Poireis called them Kege, Keke and Ki, and while the country itself and its another inhabitant believed to have some other elements like Khmer, Tai etc. were perhaps called Khe, the Bangal inhabitants of Lamangdong in Imphal valley of the 13th century A.D. also called them Kika and the Burmese called them Tarops. The Khmer and the Khmer country (Cambodia) were called Khamaran by the Poireis. Some scholars say that Khe is a Tai word for the Chinese but N. Ellas says it is Yun-nan. It is likely that the word Keke is derived from Khe. The Manipuri word *Kha-ki* meaning Chinese is perhaps to mean Southern Ki i.e. the southern Khe country.

It is said that there was a tribe known as Chou who 'wore originally a Turkish tribe with their small realm with Tibetan and

5. Dr. Gogoi : The Tai and the Tai kingdoms, page-87.

6. See foot note 1, in the section on Khamba-Theibi.

Turkish population' according to W. Eberhard,<sup>7</sup> on the western frontier of China in the Central Shen-si in the valley of Wei. They had a kingdom there from about 1122 B.C. It was transferred to Loyang near present Honnan-fu in the east at about the latter half of the 8th century B.C. They flourished there and from about that period the Chinese language and nationality are said to have been formed. This eastern Chou split up into five confederating states in the 7th century B.C. They were Chin, Ch'in, Chi, Sung and Ch'u.

These five states later began to fight with each other for supremacy. There was a long drawn war, and at last Ch'i and Ch'u emerged as surviving rivals. "In 249 B.C. Ch'in flourished as a unified empire with 36 great divisions, each ruled by a prince. In that year thirtysix princes of Ch'in founded the Ch'in dynasty, reigned under the title Shih-Wang-Ti and the country since then has been known to the world as 'China'".<sup>8</sup> In 224 B.C. Ch'u was destroyed by China and along with the fall of Ch'u the Chinese imperialism grew rapidly.

Along with the growth of Chinese Imperialism, other tribes were either absorbed or fled away from their home state. Thus it appears, some of the Chins migrated to their present habitat in the Chin hills of Burma. The precise date of their arrival in the Chin hills is not known but believed to have moved first to western Yun-nan and from where they were further pressed by the Tai and finally moved to the Chin hills about the 7th century A.D. It is also quite likely that some of them moved to the north-eastern part of China, and as far as Korea. This is perhaps the reason why we get some similar place names, folklores etc. of north-eastern China and Korea with that of the Meiteis believed to be of Kege origin.

The Kege is ethnically a mixed race. The bulk of the population is believed to be Chin mixed with Tai and latter with Sakya,

7. Dr. Gogoi : Tai and the Tai kingdom, page-87.

8. *ibid.*, page-29, foot note, see also Hoontrakul, pages-22, 38, 39.



Pyu and other Tibeto-Burmans. The Keges were the subjects of the Sakiyan princes descendants of Abhi Raja the Sakiyan king and Moriya Princes who entered Burma in the second century B.C. (in the Burmese chronicle, the Glass Palace chronicle the date is entered as 923 B.C. which is an exaggerated one Details may be seen in the section on Haokap, Chingsang, Khunpham and Ngangcheng). The Moriya king who shifted his capital from Moriya or southern Kabow valley to Khuga valley or southern part of Imphal valley was perhaps Moriya Phamballacha (Moriya Phambhal Raja). It is this Moriya prince who brought the Keges to Imphal Valley as his subjects.

As discussed in the section on Haokap, Chingsang, Khunpham and Ngangcheng, Moriya is the classic name of Kabow valley. At a later period the Poireis used to call the Moriya valley as Kabow Tampak when the Moriya chief shifted his capital and the valley began to be settled by a tribe called Kabow who infiltrated into that area from the east Along with Kabow another tribe called Sen-pi also infiltrated into Moriya. They continued to live together, and later amalgamated They became known as Senbi-Kabow. The name also indicates that it is an amalgamation of two tribes having different linguistic and ethnic affinities

*Senbi* is a modern sound, the earlier pronunciation is *Sen-pi*. Sien or Hsien is a Chinese word for Siam. The word *Sen* is a phonetic variant of the Chinese word Sien. The word *pi* means man or people It is also possible that the word *Sen* is a Kege word for Siam It is therefore seen that *Sen-pi* means 'Siamese people' Few words of Senbi dialect found in Manipuri accounts as given in the section on Meiteilon or Manipuri language, clearly show that Senbis were Siamese Tai. The mixed group of Pong and Senbi was called Tai-Pong by the Meiteis. It seems Senbi and Pong had strong affinities The name Nambul given to a small river flowing in Imphal valley is perhaps a Senbi word As the name Siam came into existence from about the 9th or 10th century A.D. as discussed in the section on Funan, Maring and Mon-Khmer, they cannot be expected to have settled in Moriya earlier than the above

date. It is most likely that they infiltrated into Kabow valley in the latter part of the 10th century A.D. or later, along with other tribes and they were parts of the exodus of the Austro-Asiatic people like Funan, Maring, Mon-Khmer etc.

The Kabow or Kapow is believed to be a cognate tribe of Karen, Kachin, Kapui etc. They were probably inhabitants of Teru the ancient state of the Karens till they were expelled in 778 A.D. by Ko-lo-feng<sup>9</sup> in course of his action of expelling the Karens from their native state. In the 11th century A.D. several Senbi-Kabows moved into the southern part of Imphal valley and settled on the south-east and north of Kege-Moirang principality, whereas the major portion of them continued to stay elsewhere in Upper Burma. In course of time they grew to a small political power and thus a Senbi-Kabow principality came into existence as a confederating principality of Kege-Moirang. When the Powers became more and more powerful, some of the Senbi-Kabows were forced out of the valley and they moved towards the east and became Burmese. On the other hand those Senbi-Kabows who continued to settle in the Imphal valley got amalgamated with the Kege-Moirangs and later became Meitais. The Senbi-Kabows who settled in Moriya and Chindwin valley were called *Mester-Kabow*. Francis Buchanan in his investigation found that the Kabows inhabiting the above stated areas were called 'Maitay-Kabow'.<sup>10</sup>

It is not known who arrived first whether Senbi or Kabow. It is also not at all impossible that they had already amalgamated before their arrival in Moriya valley later known as Kabow valley. The name Senbi-Kabow is also found to have been written as Kabow-Senbi. The tendency of the word formation is that the later arrival is usually added as suffixes. The dialect of Senbi-Kabow found in Mampuri sources are mainly Senbi words. It seems the dialects of this amalgamated tribe was substantially altered to a Senbi dialect. This is perhaps the reason why Senbi-

9. *ibid.*, page-40.

10. *ibid.*, page-27.

Kabows are regarded as Tai in later period and generally called Tai Long by the Shans and Kathe-Shan by the Burmese even though ethnically they were an admixture of Asiatic and Tai tribes.

The Manipuri chronicle Cheitharol Kumbaba records that the *sage* or family title Khunbongmayum which may also be written as Khun-Pong-mayum belonged to the Senbi-Kabow written simply Kabow in the said chronicle. If it be so then Khun Pong is a Tai word meaning 'Tai prince' where Pong is generally applied to the Mau Shans. Hence Khun-Pong-mayum means 'the family of Tai prince' indicating a descent of the royalty of either Siamese Tai or Mau Shan *Sawbwas*. Again the same chronicle enters the family title Chingangbam as of Kege origin. The word Chingangbam is derived from the word Chingangba which may be written as Chin Kang possibly deriving from the Chinese word Chin Kiang. The word Kiang is corrupted to Kyiang by the Burmese. In later periods the areas of northern Khampat was known as Kyiang. Relying on the said chronicle they must have come from Kyiang.

## THE CHAKPA

In literary accounts of this land we come across a tribe named **Chakpa**. Poireiton Khunthok refers to a scene of burning of the dead body of a Chakpa boy who is said to have died of an accident. When Poireiton learnt that it was a cremation fire he was aghast and quickly left the place. The scene seems to be an extrapolation. Anyway it is quite evident that at the time of composing the book the author took the Chakpas to be quite an early tribe inhabiting this land whose way of life was basically different from the rest of people. The Chakpas were also called Loi a name of a Tai tribe or other name of Tai. The descendants of the Chakpas are by now represented by (1) Leimaram, (2) Phayeng (3) Koutruk, (4) Khurkhun, (5) Sekmai, (6) Chairon and (7) Andro. The early dialects of the Chakpas are still traceable. Their dialects are found to be distinctly different from the dialects of other Tibeto-Burmans, neo-Tibetans and neo-Burmese but it seems there is an image of early proto-Sino-Tibetan dialects like that of the Kachins. Literary accounts casually refer them to 'speakers of *lonthei*' meaning speakers of deviated language. Details may be seen on the section on Meiteilon or Manipuri language. The suffix '-ba' in the Shan form '-pha' is found to have been adopted by the Chakpas. There was one prominent man belonging to the Chakpas named Konkhangpha<sup>1</sup> (Kon Khang Pha) as mentioned in Poireiton Khunthok. The Chakpas had little social intercourse with the rest of the people particularly with the Poireis. The reason for this seems to be the way of life to which the Chakpas used to live. Burning of the death was a horror to the rest of the people by that period. It seems the Chakpas had some relations with the Bangals of the Lamangdong principality. When this tribe entered present Manipur and settled on the hill ranges lying next to the valley in the west

1. Poireiton Khunthok, published by the Manipuri Sahitya Parishad, page-5

they were known by the name Loi. Since the Loi inhabited the hill, it was given the name Loipi-ching or Loi-jing like Langmai-jing, Nongmai-jing etc. where Loi-pi means people of Loi like Senpi. It appears the Chakpas were one of the earliest infiltrators into central Burma. The period of their arrival in Imphal valley is estimated to be about the first half of the 12th century A.D. The Chakpas settled on the foot of the Loi-jing somewhere at present Loimaram. As time passed on they began to disperse from their habitation towards the north along the foothills of Loi-jing, then they moved eastward by the side of Kanglatongbi plateau till they reached the Upper Iril valley. From Iril valley they moved towards the south through present Nongdren, Nongdam and Andro. They continued to move from there further south into present Nongpok Sekmai. Thus the Chakpas completed a circuit of settlements around the peripheral regions of the valley when the Poireis and other tribes from the north moved towards the south in the central valley. We may analyse from these circuits of movements the social segregation felt by the Chakpas in the hands of other tribes. The inert idea of the movement was probably to avoid the contact with other groups. It is also evident that the Chakpas were not in favour of inhabiting on hill tops. Had they been Tibeto-Burmans they would have moved to the hill tops. They wanted to be plain dwellers inspite of reverses. Even to this date the remnants of the Chakpas are still visible in the path of the circuit. In other parts of the ancient territory, the Chakpas inhabited the Anggo Ching and Chindwin valley.

As stated earlier Loi is another name of Tai. Prof. Coedes says that Tai is synonymous with the name Dai, and Erik Seidenfaden<sup>2</sup> is inclined to believe that Li, Lai, Loi are but other forms of Dai. Thus it is seen that Loi were Tai, and a particular tribe was called Loi by themselves.

All places close to where the Loi are believed to have settled were known as *Loi-ya-ram* meaning 'place close to Loi'. As stated

2. Dr. Gogoi: *Tai and the Tai kingdom*, page-7.

above the hill range close to the habitation of Loi was Loi-jing meaning 'Loi hill' or 'Hill of the Loi' or 'Loi-pi ching' meaning 'hill of the Loi people'. The Loi and Poirei looked down each other but the Poireis grew to a major political power. The feeling of the Poireis towards the Loi has been transferred to a vocabulary e.g. *Loi-thaba* meaning 'to send into exile', *Loi-chanba* meaning 'to conquer' etc. It also indicates slaves enslaving from war captives. Thus by now the name Loi has completely changed its original meaning. In living Manipuri language the tribes of Chakpas are still said as Loi with a vague meaning.

The word *Loi* in the Tai dialect also means 'hill'. *Loi* is also pronounced as *Noi*. Hence there is no impossibility that the hill which was near the settlement of these tribes, to which these tribes called *Loi* meaning hill, was called *Loi-Ching* (*Loijung*) by the Poireis where *ching* means hill in the dialect of the Poireis. In that case the Poireis erroneously took the word *Loi* of the Tai to be the name of that hill. Since the other name of *Loi* is *Loibi* like *Senbi* as found in *Loibi-ching* the other word of *Loijung* where *Loibi* means 'Loi people', there is less probability of this hypothesis.

The Chakpas probably brought Buddhism mingled with other elements in this valley. The deity of Ingourok Mahadeva which was originally the statue of Gautama Buddha was probably brought by the ancestors of Chakpas and when the image of Buddhism died out totally, fresh wave of Saivism and Lai ancestor worship became prominent the Buddha statue was discarded. As time passed on the latter Chakpas took that statue of Gautama Buddha to be that of Mahadeva and began to be worshipped at Ingourok and since then the deity became known as Ingourok Mahadeva. The statue of Ingourok Mahadeva clearly depicts the exceptionally long ears of the Buddha. No doubt there is image of Buddhism in other statues of the Hindu pantheon as found elsewhere in India but in the case of Ingourok Mahadeva it is clearly a Buddha statue.

As stated above the dialect of the Chakpas which will be seen in the section on Meiteilon or Manipuri language, does not suggest

them of pure Tai origin. They were most probably a mixed stock of Tai and some other proto-Sino-Tibetan tribes. It is also likely that the Chakpas had two principal clans namely Chak-pa and Chak-ma of which the Chak-mas are found in Chittagong and Mizoram. The dialect of the Chak-mas is much altered due to the presence of Bangal dialects.

In conclusion the Chak-pas ethnically seem to be some proto-Sino-Tibetan tribes who entered Burma sometime in the early Christian era and were the subjects of the Sakiyan rulers before the Pyu Kingdom was born, whom the Burmese used to call *Sak* tribe. The name *Sak* is phonetic variant of the word *Chak(pa)*. Later the Chakpas became the subjects of Pyu. When the Pyu kingdom was destroyed in the year 832 A.D. by the Man rebels from Yun-nan these people moved towards the north-west and settled in the ancient kingdom of Manipur at the Anggo-ching (Anggo hills) in Kahow valley where they probably got mixed with or politically associated with Tai tribes who were called Loi. Again the Loi seems to have arrived in that areas from the Loi-jiri hills before the Mau Shans were active in that area. Another branch of the Chakpas who moved towards a more westerly direction settled in Chittagong and Mizoram are now represented by the Chak-mas.

The way of life or the religious belief of the Chak-pas who settled in Imphal valley strongly suggests that their earlier habitat was Pyu since the religious belief of the Pyu kingdom was Brahmanism mixed with Buddhism which is stated to have strangled by various heathen growths and became mingled with debased Tantric system which is a mixture of black magic, witchcraft and Siva worship.

## THE MAREM

The Marems appear to have settled on the Loijung ranges to the south of the Mangang settlement possibly on the south-west of Lamangdong. They also arrived by more or less the same route as that of Mangang. It is believed that they arrived on this land close to Imphal valley in the 11th century A D or a little later than the Mangangs. Very little is known about their political life. We have no record how they amalgamated with other tribes. No doubt a large number of Marems got amalgamated with other tribes and became Meitais. The rest of the Marems moved towards the north of their settlement. In the 15th century A D more precisely in the period from c 1403 to c 1415 A D they were found to have inhabited on the Koubru hills at a place known as Yangphan Chaklikpok.<sup>1</sup> In this new settlement they were frequently attacked by the Poirei kings. We have accounts entered in the Cheitharol Kumbaba in which it is stated that king Telheiba<sup>2</sup> (c 1398 A D — 1401 A.D) and king Tabungba<sup>3</sup> (c 1403—15 A D) successively raided them. It indicates the Marems flourished in that settlement.

By far the Marems were one of the most important tribes in naming different places. It appears they were a cultured group of people. The Marems in their dialect called the sun *mor* and plain or plateau *pha*. Ningthourol Lambuba states, "*Mayim loibi Maremna tampakpud phai-O kouye*"<sup>4</sup> and "*loibi thatalok, malem moitalok koubadi mayim loibi Marem-na numitpud mor-O*

1. Cheitharol Kumbaba, published by the Manipuri Sahitya Parishad, Imphal, page-8. "Amasung Kouba chingsama Yangphan Chaklikpok ta loibi Marem-ga lan sokneise".

2. *ibid.*, page-8.

3. *ibid.*, page-8.

4. Ningthourol Lambuba edited by O. Bhogeswar Singh, page-188.



*kouye*"<sup>5</sup> which mean, "the Marems who settled on the hills called the plain or plateau *phai*, and "the reason for naming Thatalok of the hills and Mottalok of the earth is owing to the saying of the Marems who settled on the hills, of the sun *moi*". When the Marems arrived on the Loijing ranges there was one Tai tribe inhabiting on the foot of that hill somewhere to the north of their settlement. This Tai tribe was also called Loi. Most of the Tibeto-Burmans and other tribes called them Tai. The Marems inhabiting on the Loijing ranges most probably called them *Moi-Tai* with a literal meaning 'Tai of the sun' or 'Tai of the land of the sun', because the Marems called Imphal valley particularly the Khuga valley '*Langmeihen Moi-ram*'<sup>6</sup> meaning 'Land of the sun, with abundant langmei'. Langmei is a kind of bird which is now probably called Langmei-dong. It is from this word i.e. *Moi-tai* that the appellation Meitei came into existence. More details may be seen in the section on the origin of the name Meitei.

The Marems belonged to the Man people according to Ningthourol Lambuba. The text states, "*Nayuwa Chingkhong Poireiton-na loibi sadaba hembra nadaba-bu khuntharakpada mayim loibi Marem-ma chakmom khambi mei-bu langna ngainganye, Meiling-O koubabu Poirei tapha thibana Maring-O Kouye*"<sup>7</sup> and further says, "*Muring Khamtomya-O koubadi mayim loibi-Mana Chingkhong Poireiton-gi maran mathum-bu mutna yana khamna yanle*"<sup>8</sup>. The literal meaning of the above text is, "When Poireiton came in search of a place where there was neither illness nor death, the Marems received him by burning an auspicious fire, for which they were called Meiling (*Mei* means 'fire' and *ling* or *ring* means to set up). The people of Poirei mis-pronounced Meiling (Meiring) to Maring" and "the entire belongings of Chingkhong Poireiton were stolen by the Man people inhabiting on the hills, for

5. *ibid*, page-189.

6. *ibid.*, page-73.

7. *ibid.*, page-179.

8. *ibid.*, page-179.

which the place was given the name *Maring Khamtomya*'. It may be noted that there is a spelling mistake in the text of the word *Loibi-Mana*, the better spelling from present angle should have been *loibi-Man-na*.

It is therefore seen that the *Marems* were later called *Marings*. So *Marem* and *Maring* are the two names of the same tribe. However the *Marems* were still found inhabiting the northern side of the *Loijing* ranges upto the time of king *Tabungba* (c 1403-15 A.D.). If *Marems* were changed to *Marings* there should not have *Marems* in the 15th century A.D., but we find them. Since the text connects the naming of *Marem* to *Marings* with the activities of *Poireiton*, they are therefore supposed to have inhabited some places through which *Poireiton* came in course of his migration to this land not necessarily within the present political *Manipur*, or to be an extrapolation of naming *Marem* to *Maring* by latter scholars as most of the names of early period are attributed to the activities of *Poireiton* in some way or the other. It became perhaps a fashion of latter scholars to attribute something with the activities of *Poireiton* in giving place names dispersed in a very wide area including inaccessible areas. No doubt he gave names of several places.

People of *Man* origin began to disperse from their ancestral home in central China to *Yun-nan* and northern *Burma* by about the sixth century A. D. of which we may mention the *Man* of the *Khu-Man* and the *Mans* living in *Yun-nan*. Some *Mans* of *Khuman* came to *Imphal* valley from *Putao* area in northern *Burma* in the beginning of the 9th century A.D. as a component of the waves of immigration of *Poireiton*. Again the *Mans* of *Yun-nan* who were known in history of *Burma* as '*Man-rebels*' attacked the *Pyu* kingdom lying close to the territory of the ancient kingdom of *Manipur*, took three thousand *Pys* to captivity and carried them to *Yun-nan* in the year 832 A.D. which brought about the end of the *Pyu* kingdom in *Burma*<sup>9</sup>. More details are discussed in the section on *Poirei*.

9. Dr. Gogoi, : *Tai and the Tai kingdoms*, page-136

It appears the people of Man origin who were in turn of Mon origin, who came to the present political Manipur and settled on the western side were called Marem while those who settled on the eastern side were called Marings. It seems these group of people came from southern Yun-nan and northern Thailand by about the latter half of the 11th century A.D. as a result of political upheavals and other natural calamities, and found to have settled in the western parts of Manipur close to Imphal valley by about the 12th century A.D. More details are discussed in the section on Funan, Maring and Mon-Khmer.

## THE MANGANG

The Mangangs are believed to have arrived on this land next to the Chakpas in the 12th century A.D. The Mangangs are very closely akin to the controversial tribe Mayang and also to Thongnang. They came earlier than the Mayangs and settled on the Loi-jing ranges to the north of Laimaton Phourungba. The particular place where the Mangangs settled was given the name Loi-jing Phouoi Ching<sup>1</sup> according to the text Ningthourol Lambuba. It is believed that they had settled on the above stated place sometime in the latter half of the 12th century A.D. At the beginning of the 13th century A.D. the Mangangs appear to have flourished in their new settlement possibly under the leadership of their chieftain named Konkhuca. The Mangangs were attacked by Naothingkhong the Poirei king at about the beginning of the 13th century A.D. where Konkhuca<sup>2</sup> the Mangang chief was defeated and a good number of the Mangangs were brought and absorbed by the Poireis particularly by the Poirei clan to which Naothingkhong belonged. For this victory Naothingkhong is found to have been given the title *Mangang Ngamba* meaning 'the Victor of the Mangang'. The absorbed Mangangs were for the time being known as Poirei-Mangangs. The Mangangs had a strong impact both culturally and politically on the Poirei clan to which Naothingkhong belonged, so much so that the successors of Naothingkhong

1. Ningthourol Lambuba, edited by O. Bhogeswar Singh,

2. *ibid.*, page-35. "lamlen nongohup Tafurol, Ate Safu Tao *Mangang Hao* tamyasing, sitmei long-semba, khudeng maitha tabapung, Thongnang onteram, Mayang hanna ching saronyaida khouabadi tubi thikna mathinnai lairen meipuoet chunglep 60 chong, kaoren shankhang 10 lan, khanang laiton lengna panthengnabadi Mangang yaga chaire. Machal leima kao, maning leima sanseng, Mangang, Mangang pungsung, Mangang sensung, Mangang kori tharaochi, thonglen lanpaowak, Kasa paotakwasung loklakeye. Huiyen lannikiti Mangang Konkhuca atengbabu kaina hulle".

adopted the suffix *-cha* of the Mangangs in their names. Thus we find the immediate successors as Khongtekcha, Keiren-cha etc. The impact was so strong that the Poirei clan to which Naothingkhong belonged also became known as Mangang clan in the closing part of the 13th century A.D. It seems by about this period all the Mangangs became Poireis. There are indications that the Mangangs had intermarriages with the Chengleis while they were inhabiting on the Loiing ranges. Thus in the beginning of the 14th century A. D. the Mangangs had lost their independent identity. The dialect of the Mangangs appear to have been much influenced by other Tibeto-Burmans.

We have very little account of the Mangang before they became Poireis. They belonged to a group of Tibeto-Burmans who were commonly called Hao<sup>3</sup> tribe by the Poireis and came from the hive of Tibeto-Burman family around the Hukong valley. Mangang is an amalgamated tribe of Bodo and Ngangoi, and the Mangang suffix *-cha* is of Bodo origin. More details may be seen in the section on Mayang. They probably moved along the course of the Ningthi river to Moriya and further moved south of it till they came across the mediaeval highways coming from the Arakan pass. After proceeding a little they moved towards the north and finally reached Laimatol of the Loiing range.

The absorbed Mangangs used to hold high posts of Poireis. It is said that the Commander-in-chief of king Khongtekcha was a Mangang named Thongak Lakpicha a brave man who killed several Keges in a battle.

## THE MAYANG

This particular tribe is the most controversial one. Originally they were Tibeto-Burmans and like other Tibeto-Burmans who entered from the south, they also came by the south route. They probably left their ancestral home near Hukong valley and moved southwards along the course of the Chindwin river. The period of leaving their ancestral home is not known with certainty but it is believed to be about the 11th century A.D. or somewhat later. By moving further south, it seems they were scattered near the Chin hills and Moriya. From there they infiltrated towards Imphal valley by the mediaeval south highways. The Mayangs before entering Imphal valley settled somewhere on the south highway. The Mayangs and their cognate tribes who entered this land were Mangangs and Thongnangs. Most of these Tibeto-Burman tribes were known to the Poireis as Hao tribes who may also be called neo-Burmese and most of these Hao tribes settled all along the mediaeval highways from Arakan to the Loijing ranges. The Mangang and Thongnang however settled within the present political boundary of Manipur, close to the valley, while the Mayangs settled within the present Lushai hills area in the latter part of the 12th century A.D.

Of these groups of Tibeto-Burmans the Mayangs mainly settled on the south of Champhai at the juncture of Manipur route and Arakan pass. While they were inhabiting there for a considerable length of time they probably got mixed with non-Mongoloid proto-Bangals who came from west and south-west. At about the early part of the thirteenth century A.D. a group of Bangals came and lived together with them. The Bangals and the proto-Bangals called the settlement *Basa* meaning 'temporary settlement'. The Tripura chronicle *Rajmala* indicates that *Basa* was close to *Rangamati*.<sup>1</sup>

1. *Rajmala*, the Tripura chronicle, Vol. II, page-3,

“Koutuka Brahman bole jabo ami songe  
*Rangamati* bonchibo je Tripurate ronge  
Sotyo kore Brahman rajase sotyo kollo  
Bisheswar pujah kori *Basa-te* ashilo.”

After some years of their stay at Basa a group of Shan invaders headed by Samlungfa the Pong prince came and subdued them. After subduing Basa, Samlungfa left northwards for some other countries where he met the Poireis and defeated them. After the invasion of Samlungfa all the inhabitants of Basa appear to have moved towards the north and finally settled at Lamangdong (Lamangdong) at about 1225 A.D. and carved out a principality there and continued to live with other tribes who lived in the valley in good terms for more than three decades. By about 1260 A.D. a hostility arose between the Lamangdong principality and the Kege principality lying to the south of Lamangdong principality. It appears after destroying the Lamangdong principality the Keges moved towards the north and attacked the Poirei principality where they got the worst reverses. The Bangals, proto-Bangals and *Mayang Basis* fled to the Loiung ranges in scattered conditions. Immediately after the death of Khongtekcha the Poirei king who defeated the Keges there was an interregnum for 11 years as recorded in the Chhitharol Kumbaba. It indicates that the aftermath of the war was a catastrophe that lasted for about a decade. It was a period of turmoil, but nothing is mentioned in any text about the cause of the unaccounted period. People who were inhabitants of Basa were known as *Basi*. Most of the Mayangs took shelter on Lamatol hill, rather a peak on Loiung range where the Thongnangs<sup>2</sup> settled. As stated above the Thongnangs were a clan of the tribe to which the Mayangs belonged. The chief of Thongnangs were given the name Thonglen. Ningthourol Lambuba describes the hill through which the Mayangs retreated as *Thongnang onteram Mayang hunnaching*<sup>3</sup> meaning 'Thongnang facing-Mayang-retreat-hill'.

2. In the Tripura chronicle, Rajmala, a name Thanangchi is found. It is said that Thanangchi is a place name to where the Kukis settled. This name closely agrees with the name Thongnang found in Manipuri accounts. If it be so the Thongnangs were akin to the old Kukis.

According to the Thadou traditions Lamyangs are said to be a cognate tribe of the Thadou. Again Lamyang & Mayang seem to be cognate tribes.

3. Ningthourol Lambuba, edited by O. Bhogswar Singh, page-35

The Mayangs moved towards the north-west of *Mayang-hanna-ching* through hill terrains and gorges and finally settled in scattered condition in the northern parts of present Tripura upto the Barail ranges before the coming of Kacharis and Tripuris. The Mayangs there, probably got mixed with the Bodos at a later period. This is probably the reason why Tibeto-Burman tribes of Bodo origin like the Kacharis and Tripuris were often called Mayangs in literary accounts of this land. In due course the Mayangs got completely mixed with other tribes and lost their independent identity in the 16th century A.D. Some scattered Mayangs however continued to stay on the hills of Manipur. Those mixed-Mayang remnants were known as *Pasis* (Basis) and they were detected according to Ningthourol Lambuba by the Khuman chieftain Nongyai Thinkonhanba<sup>4</sup> (c. 1290-1310 A.D.). He raided the village of *Pasi* which was located on the southern hills and while retiring he left his crest made of a bunch of *langmei* at the gate of the village which was found by Mayee Thumbi the daughter of the *Pasi* chief named Leitang. She called Nongyai Thinkonhanba to come back and collect his *langmei*. Accordingly he came back and requested the girl to pin the *langmei* by her own hand on his turban which she complied with. Since then the place became known as Langmei-thet. *Langmei* is the feather of Langmei-dong bird.

It is believed, though racially Mangang and Mayang belonged to the same origin, the later Mayangs appear to be more darker in complexion possibly because of their mixing with Bangals and proto-Bangals.

It is also believed that the original appellation was Maiyang but pronounced as Mayang, and Meiyang with more emphasis by the Poireis. Because of the association of the Bangals with the Mayangs, they were also at a later period became known as Mayangs. However the application of the name Mayang has further changed its significance. By now it has exclusively applied with the disappearance of original Mayangs, to almost all Indo-Aryans,

4. *ibid.*, page-181.



Dravidians and pre-Dravidians. The application has further a tendency of applying to all outsiders of non-Mongoloid origin.

Possibly after regrouping or anything of the kind, the first recorded assault of the Mayangs attacking the Poireis since their retreat through the Mayang Hanna Ching, is believed to be on the northern side of the Laimaton Phourungba in the latter half of the fourteenth century A. D., during the reign of Kongyamba (c. 1391-98 A. D.) the Poirei king. They were beaten back by Kongyamba and captured most of them alive and among those captured alive, according to Cheitharol Kumbaba<sup>5</sup> there were Aphe Raja, Tingku Raja, Lakasumka Tao, Areng Ayang Tao, and according to Ningthourol Lambuba<sup>6</sup>, Apheracha, Tingku-laba, Lanka-sumka Tao, Aring Arang Tao. The two texts not only differ in spelling but also in certain fundamental applications. The place where the engagement took place, is said to be at *Kouba Hinglen Ching* situated on the southern part of the Koubru hill ranges. *Kouba Hinglen ching* was also known as *Kouba Inglen Ching*. Those Mayang invaders are believed to be a mixed stock of remnants of the retreat. They probably settled on some parts of the Koubru hills. The name ended by Tao is usually found among the early Chakpas.

The second wave of invasion of the Mayangs was in the year 1504 A.D. In the first phase the Mayangs killed several Meiteis and they became momentarily victorious. These group of Mayangs are different from those earlier Mayangs. The battle was fought at a place known as Amchi Nongmaikon (also Nonglaikon) Tangkhul Leihoupok<sup>7</sup> lying on the north-western part of Manipur close to Imphal valley. This place is believed to be on the north-western side of Ngaprum Chingjen. When the news of the defeat had

5. Cheitharol Kumbaba, published by the Manipuri Sahitya Parishad. page-8.

6. Ningthourol Lambuba, edited by O. Bhogeswar Singh, page-192.

7. *ibid.*, page-238.

reached, prince Nongthomba<sup>8</sup> son of Kiyamba rushed to the place and abused the commander Angoupamba Loichangamba for his cowardly acts. With the re-inforced force, the Mayangs were repulsed and several of them were caught alive. Those caught alive according to Cheitharol Kumbaba were Kiyamba, Nungma Cheng, Teima Cheng, and Langtei. Ningthourol Lambuba<sup>9</sup> writes Kamba in place of Kiyamba with one more addition of the captive named Kanbi Ayang. This group of Mayangs are found to be of Bodo group of people like Timafi-cha and Tima-cha, who were later known as Kacharis and Tripuris.

We will investigate the tribes who were categorised as Mayangs from available records like Ningthourol Lambuba and Cheitharol Kumbaba.

(1) In the period of Kongyamba (c 1391-1398 A.D.) the revolt of the Mayangs was beaten back by Kongyamba and several of them were taken to captivity which included Aphe Raja, Tingku Raja, Lamkasumka Tao, Areng Ayang Tao according to Cheitharol Kurubaba, and Apheracha, Tingkulaba, Lankasumka Tao, Aring Arang Tao, according to Ningthourol Lambuba. The place of engagement was at Kouba Hinglen Ching as discussed above.

(2) In the year 1504 A.D. Kiyamba sent his son Nongthomba to crush the Mayang invaders who became momentarily victorious, with a re-inforced force. Nongthomba defeated them and took all of them as captives which included Nungma Cheng, Teima Cheng, Langtei etc. according to both the texts.

(3) In the year 1519 A.D. Lam Kiyamba defeated Arai Champra.<sup>10</sup> The text does not mention to which tribe Arai Champra belonged but it is believed to be a tribe who were within the category of Mayangs.

8. Cheitharol Kumbaba, published by the Manipuri Sahitya Parishad, page-11.

9. *ibid.*, page-11.

10. *ibid.*, page-12.

(4) In the year 1532 A.D. during the reign of Kabomba, Tusen was captured and Arai Champra Lankasesh was taken as captive.<sup>11</sup>

(5) In the year 1533 A.D. during the reign of Kabomba, the invasion by Panchom Takhen<sup>12</sup> was crushed, and several of his men were caught alive which included two drummers namely Chamiya-cha and Hachakang. The engagement took place at Lonloi Leimatak located towards the south-west of his capital according to Ningthourol Lambuba. Cheitharol Kumbaba refers to only that Kabomba defeated Takhen.<sup>13</sup> It may be mentioned here that Kabomba was hardly 14 years of age in 1534 A.D. The text does not mention clearly whether the name Takhen was a tribe or principality or name of a person. However Ningthourol Lambuba describes it to be the name of a person. The captives who were men of Takhen Panchom dug trenches for drainage in the year 1534 A.D. The name of the drainage became known as *Takhen-khong* lying on the eastern part of Imphal city.

(6) In the year 1540 A.D. Kabomba captured Kane and took its chief Wangpal Lakpa and his wife Leichon-nu as captives.<sup>14</sup>

(7) In the year 1545 A.D. or some what later but earlier than 1557 A.D. King Chalamba raided the land of the Thongnangs where the Mayangs occupied on one side. In that raid he defeated Rasgoon the grower of betal nuts and took away a horse named *Marambi* as booty.<sup>15</sup>

(8) In the year 1557 A.D. during the reign of Chalamba, a Meitei princess named Monsambi was given in marriage to a Mayang king for the first time as a formal matrimonial relation with the Mayangs. The name of the Mayang king is not mentioned in the

11. *ibid.*, page-13.

12. Ningthourol Lambuba, edited by O. Bhogeswar Singh, page-251.

13. Cheitharol Kumbaba, published by the Manipuri Sahitya Parishad, page-13.

14. *ibid.*, page-13.

15. Ningthourol Lambuba, edited by O. Bhogeswar Singh, page-262.

text. But the king was a Mayang is evident from the title conferred on Monsambi.<sup>16</sup> She was given the title *Mayang Leima*. The title Mayang Leima Leima is given to, either a Mayang princess married to a Meitei king, or a Meitei princess or girl married to a Mayang king. So Monsambi was a Meitei Leima Monsambi *vi-se-vis* Mayang Leima Monsambi.

(9) In the year 1591 A.D. Mungyamba subdued Tonsen<sup>17</sup> a principality of the Mayangs believed to have been located near Lunglei in present Mizoram and in the same year a princess was born to him. The princess was given the name Tonsen-nu from the name of Tonsen. She was given in marriage to a Tonsen chief when she was hardly 13 years of age in the year 1603 A.D.

(10) In the period of Loitongba (c 1336-46 A.D.), there was a village on the western side of the valley. The village was inhabited by the Bangals. Ningthourol Lambuba refers the village to *Pangal khun*<sup>18</sup> meaning 'Bungal village'. Loitongba collected some tops that were found playing by the Bangals. Here the name Mayang is not applied to the Bangals.

(11) We have records of matrimonial relations with the Mayangs since 1557 A. D. in which Meitei girls were given in marriages to the Mayangs. We do not have any reference in these two texts about Mayang girls marrying to Meitei Kings. There must have been marriages of that kind also. In some manuscripts which have somehow or the other fallen in the hands of local pandits and been preserved, some references of Mayang girls marrying to Meitei kings are found. Since these manuscripts cannot be authenticated, it is difficult to determine the date of writing. We get at least two such references. The first one was Chingurembi a Mayang princess married to Naothingkhong (c. 1215-50 A.D.) and another Chibarembi a Mayang princess married to Thawanthaba (c. 1353-56 A.D.). In case of Chingurembi, she is believed to be a Bungal

16. Cheitharol Kumbaba, published by the Manipur Sahitya Parishad.

17. *ibid.*, page-19.

18. Ningthourol Lambuba, edited by O. Bhageswar Singh, page-84.

princess of Basa who shifted to Lamangdong. It is probable since Basa was taken as a Mayang principality their princess was also termed as a *Mayang Leima*. Details may be seen in the section on Chingurembi.

(a) As stated above, Monsambi was given in marriage to a Mayang king in the year 1557 A.D. Records further reveal that (b) Mayang Leima Tarung Nganbi in the year 1566 A D , (c) Mayang Leima Koirembi in 1586 A.D. and (d) Mayang Leima Tonsen-nu in 1603 A D were given in marriages to the Mayang Kings.

But from about the 17th century A.D. the name Takhen appears to have started applying to a group of people who were categorised earlier as Mayangs. In 1609 A D a girl named Yangnu who belonged to the family of Akozam was given in marriage to a Takhen<sup>19</sup>. She was given the title *Takhen Leima* for the first time. Again in the year 1630 A D a Meitei girl named Sana Ponchem-bi who belonged to a Hakwanthem family was given in marriage to a Mayang chief. It may be mentioned here that Sana Ponchem bi was a girl of Bangal origin and she was given the title *Mayang Leima*. The family title Hakwanthem was allotted to a Bangal family. The Bangals by about this period were not included in the category of Mayangs.

The Tripura chronicle, *Rajmala* written in half fabulous verses in modern Bengali without any date, describes that a Tripura king named Teidakhin married a Meitei princess<sup>20</sup>. The name of the Meitei princess is not found in the text but further mentions that was the first matrimonial relationship between Makhlee and Tripura. The Tripuris called Manipuri *Makhlee Desh*. Teidakhin is said to be the 19th king of Tripura beginning from Chandra (the Moon). As such, the text claims that the Tripuri kings belonged to the Chandravangsa of the Mahabharata mythology. Amidst such

19. Chaitarol Kumbaba, published by the Manipuri Sahitya Parishad, page 23

20. *Rajmala*, the Tripura chronicle, Vol I, page-3.

"*Makhlee rajave koira bibaho koira raja*"

half fabulous accounts or lineage of kings, one king named Tripur appearing in the 46th descendant from Chandra in the lineage to be the king of that land from whose name the country became known as Tripura. The text in a vague way indicates the other name of Tripur was Chantai.\*<sup>1</sup> It is believed that the name Tripur was given by the Brahmins who fled to remote places as a result of Muslim occupation of western Bengal

It is said that Tripur was succeeded by his son Tri-lochan Tri-lochan was succeeded by his son Dakhin and grandson Tei-dakhin. Tei-Dakhin was succeeded by his son Su-dakhin and grandson Tara-dakhin. The above four kings are found to have associated the term *Dakhin* in their names. No other king in their long lines of kings is found to have associated the term *Dakhin*.

The term *Takhin* for the Tripuris by the Meiteis is derived from the name Dakhin and the tribe to which Dakhin belonged also became known as Takhen as in the case of Tekhao for Assam which is also derived from the name of the river Dikhu or Dikhao.

By carefully matching these accounts, it is seen that Mon-bam-bi the Meitei princess was married to Tei-dakhin the king of Tripura in the year 1557 A.D. The two names viz. Chantai as

21. *ibid.*, editorial comment page 46 and maintext page 4.

"Tripur bhasate Chantai rajate kohoi  
Chantai kohilo tara sune nuapati  
Tripur hangso je mota hoire utpati"

The casting of the Tripura chronology started from Bi-chandra Manika the 181st king in the long line of kings. By that period the chronology was called *Rajaratnakar*. It was renamed *Rajmala* from the time of Dharma Manika. The earlier text was written in old Sanskrit while the latter was written in Bengali verses. *Rajaratnakar* mentions only names of Chantai, Durlabhondra, Sukeswai and Vanoswar.

The name Chantai is also found in later period to have given to the priest of 'Chaturdarsa Devata' and further said in the editorial comments appearing on page 136 Vol I *Rajmala* to have derived from the Halam word *chuyantai*. The Halam is a branch of Kuki and *chuyantai* means Brahmin in the dialect of Halam according to the above text.

found in Rajmala and Langtei as found in Cheitharol Kumbaba are compatible formations indicating they were of the same tribe or brother of the same family. The spelling Chantai could have been a variant of Chantei. It is therefore most likely that Chantei and Langtei were brothers of the same family who moved towards the south from their settlement to establish kingdoms. Chantei moved towards the south-eastern part of present Tripura and established his kingdom there,<sup>22</sup> but Langtei on the otherhand moved towards Imphal valley where he was defeated in an encounter and became a captive in the 1504 A.D. The momentary victory of Langtei indicates that Langtei came with an organised force and that he was a prince. The Manipuri accounts do not elaborate the identity of Langtei. Since the date of invasion of Langtei is known it is quite reasonable to say that the date of establishment of the Tripura kingdom by Chantei is also by about the same period. It is therefore most probable that the date of birth of the Tripura kingdom is c. 1504 A.D. though they claim it to be the 6th century A.D., more precisely from 594 A.D. They were the Bodos from north (Achar and Dimapur who moved towards the south.

It is also mentioned in the text of Rajmala that Dakhin had eleven other brothers who quarreled among themselves over the inheritance of throne. The eldest son of Dakhin named Drikpati alias Birsan became the Cachari king while the other brothers left the capital. The editor of Rajmala collected some names of the brothers of Dakhin, which however do not mention the name of Panchom Dakhin who invaded Manipur in the year 1533 A.D. during the reign of Kabomba as mentioned earlier. It is believed that Panchom Dakhin was a brother of Dakhin, possibly the fifth younger brother of Dakhin. It is also reasonable that a contemporary of a grandson of Panchom Dakhin ( 1533 A.D.) could have reached a marriageable

22. *ibid.*, editorial comment page-32 sl. no. (3). The origin of Tripuris who founded the kingdom of Tripura, is stated, to have believed to be of Kacharis.

age in 1557 A.D. the year in which Tei-dakhin the grandson of Dakhin a brother or contemporary of Panchom Dakhin attained a marriageable age and married Monsambi the Meitei Leima.

Upto the middle of the 16th century A.D. the Kacharis had not properly established their kingdom in present Cachar area. They were mainly confined in the North Cachar hills and Dinapur area. There was no significant kingdom on the south, west and south-west of Manipur by that period except the kingdom of Tripura and some small cities or principalities mainly inhabited by Tibeto-Burman tribes. Matrimonial relations were confined mainly to these regions. So it is seen that the Mayang kings referred to in the texts like Cheitharol Kumbaba and Ningthourol Lambuba etc. were tribes who were later known as Takhens. This deduction is also confirmed by Cheitharol Kumbaba in which it is stated that three Mayang families belonging to Ramatao the son of the Mayang king Manikphra came to Manipur for settlement in the year 1660 A.D.<sup>23</sup> It is believed that these families settled in Moirang and became Moirangs. The Tripura chronicle Rajmala mentions that either *phra* or *pha* was a title given to the kings of Tripura which started from king Niladhaja. The meaning of *phra* or *pha* according to the Tripuri dialect is father.<sup>24</sup> King Niladhaja is claimed by the said chronicle to be the 73rd king as found in the long list of kings. The name Manik or Manika is also stated to have been given from the 145th king named Ratna Manika. It is clearly seen that the Tripuris were earlier known as Mayang before the appellation Takhen evolved. It is also seen that both the names namely Mayang Takhen were concurrently used in the 17th century A.D. as seen from records. In the year 1609 A.D. a Meitei girl named Yangnu who belonged to the family of Akoijam was given in marriage to a Takhen king. She was given the title *Takhen Leima* Akoijam Chanu Yang-nu not as *Muyang Leima*. At a later period when

23. Cheitharol Kumbaba, published by the Manipuri Sahitya Parishad, page-33.

24. Rajmala Tripura chronicle, Vol. I.



proto-Bangals were categorised as Mayangs, the Tripuris were given the name *Mayang Akaksha* and the proto-Bangals were given another name *Mayang Kotisha* derived from *Mayang Kalacharya*.

As discussed above the application of the name had drastically changed. The Bangals and proto-Bangals had fallen into the category of Mayangs while the Mayang proper escaped the name and they were given the name of the tribe to which they belonged.

It is not definitely known to which tribe the Sachung referred to in the text Poireiton Khunthok belonged. The tribe seems to have belonged to Mayang or some other cognate tribes of Mayang later influenced by the Lai tribes. We find the name of the Sachung chief in the above mentioned book is Langmeiremba. The suffixes *-remba* for male and *-rembi* for female are found to have frequently adopted by these tribes as done by the Mayang tribes. These tribes also moved from their ancestral home in northern Burma towards the south and were found active in present Lushai Hills area from about the 12th century A.D. They were also found in the southern hills of present Manipur in the latter half of the 14th century A.D. There was one chief of that Sachung tribe named Khamlangba who married Samphabi the daughter of Songlen Lanthaba (c. 1340-55 A.D.) the Moirang chief. Songlen Lanthaba seems to be the immediate successor of Sanarakkhra. With the impact of Lai culture for ancestor worship Khamlangba later became a demi-god. Now we find the shrine of Khamlangba as Lai Khamlangba or Lai-ingthou Khamlangba. The Sachung tribe is probably an admixture of Bodo, Kham and other Tibeto-Burmans with strong Lai elements.

It is not known whether Samphabi had any other name or not. In some manuscripts the wife of Khamlangba is found to have the name Kalika. Because of the mingling of Lai culture and Saivism, Kalika is often get confused with the other name of Devi. Very often we ponder how Devi became the wife of Khamlangba or how the name of Siva became Khamlangba. If Khamlangba had a wife other than Samphabi who was called Kalika at all, she

must have belonged to a Moriya since such names are very common for the Moriyas. We find similar names like Rasika in the Kege-Moirang principality whose ethnic origin is Moriya. The name Khamlangba seems to have associated with the Kham tribe commonly called Kham-pa of Khamnung of the Khams region or he himself was a Kham-Yang a mixed stock of Kham and Yang. We also get the name of a Chingsong chieftain called Khamlangba whose wife Larala Sang-nu had an affair with Poirei king Tabungba. Chingsong tribes became Tangkhuls

As discussed above the name Mayang is also pronounced as Meiyang and in that case its meaning is 'fire-glittering' where *mei* is a Tibeto-Burman word meaning 'fire' and *yang* a Tai word meaning 'glittering'. There was one tribe named Khamyang meaning 'gold-glittering' inhabited in the area of Hukong valley in the first half of the 13th century A.D. They were most probably an admixture of Kham and some other tribes of Tai origin who came from eastern Burma. The Shans used to call them by the name Ahtun Khamyang Shan.

Again the suffix *Ma* seems to be the name of a tribe. We find names of tribes or names of different clans of a tribe which begin with letter 'M' like Mon, Man, Ma-rem, Ma-ring, Ma-hou, Ma-hui, Ma-yang, Ma-ngang etc. of which Ma-hou, Ma-hui, Ma-yang and Ma-ngang are amalgamated tribes. The tribes Hou, Hui, Yang, Ngang are the other components of Ma. The Hou is a neo-Tibetan, whereas Hui and Yang are tribes of Tai origin and Ngang is Ngangoi i.e. Anga as stated in earlier sections. We also find such pattern of name formations of the tribes who inhabited in the ancient state of Teru in China which begins with the letter 'K' like King, Kang, Kong, Kou, Ka-ren, Ka-chin, Ka-pui, Ka-pow etc. who were more or less of the same ethnic origin. These similarities strongly suggest that the tribes mentioned above whose names begin with the letter 'M' must have the same ethnic origin. The Ma tribe is most probably the Bodo. The name Bodo or Boro is supposed to be a Tibetan origin to mean the people of the snows, where *Bod* or *Pot* means 'land of the snows' in the Tibetan dialect, and

Mon too is said to be a tribe whom the Tibetans used to call *Monpa* who were the people of the southern lower Himalayas.

Conversely the original name of the Bodo is *Ma* as evident from the analysis of the name of their tribe like *Dimacha* (*di-Ma-cha*). The word *di-Ma* means 'Ma of water' (water here is the Brahmaputra river) and *-cha* is a suffix meaning 'offspring'. Thus *Dimacha* (*di-Ma-cha*) means 'the offspring of Ma of the big water'. The other meaning of *ma* in Bodo dialect is 'big'. It is therefore seen that Mon and Bodo were also cognate tribes or of the same ethnic origin. The Manipuri word *macha* meaning, issue of a parent, child, small etc. is a Bodo origin deriving from the Bodo word *Ma-cha* meaning 'offspring of Ma', but in Manipuri *ma* is an inflectional form of *mahak*. The *Dimacha* again acquired new appellations like Kachari and Tripuri when they settled in Cachar and Tripura besides Koch, Lalung, Chutiya etc.

The literary accounts of Manipur as discussed earlier, describe Tho-ngang later deviated to Thong-nang and Ma-yang are akin tribes. It may be mentioned that Tho-ngang is pronounced as Thonang in the Tripuri sources. The words or names of Ma-ngang and Tho-ngang are in parallel formations indicating cognate tribes of which the prefix *Tho-* of Tho-ngang is the name of a tribe of Tai origin who were at one time the subjects of the Sakiyan princes of the Tagaung country and the suffix *-ngang* is a tribe of Ngangoi i.e. Anga origin. The suffix *-yang* of Ma-yang cannot be other than the Tai word *yang* as discussed earlier or the name of a tribe of Tai origin who came from Khao-Khao-mao-lon in eastern Burma. It may be mentioned here that the names of Tai tribes have meanings, for example, Nong is said to be the name of a Tai tribe, but in the dialect of some Tai tribes it means 'lake'. Similarly the suffix part of the name i.e. *yang* is most probably a name of a Tai tribe. So the conclusion would be that the Ma-yang is a mixed tribe of Bodo and other tribes of Tai origin whereas Ma-ngang is an admixture of Bodo and Ngangoi i.e. Anga. The Ma-hou who became a constituent part of the Tangkhuls is also a mixed tribe of Bodo and neo-Tibetan tribe Hou. The tribe Ma-hui which is also a mixed

tribe of Bodo and a tribe named Hui probably a Tai origin. The appellation Hui is found in the name Hui-yaibam Longchak a quarrelsome Khunjan as recorded in Ningthourol Lambuba where Khunjan is a Tai tribe. The Ma-hui when they settled in the southern part of Imphal valley became known as Moirang a mixed word of Marem and Ngangoi. Besides Tho-ngang the cognate tribes of Mayang are Lam-yang and Kham-yang.

It is seen from the above investigations that the Bodo and some of the Tibeto-Burman tribes with strong Bodo elements were the original Mayangs. The Bodos were also Tibeto-Burmans. The Manipuri accounts clearly give that the Thongnangs were very closely akin to the Mayangs, and again the Thongnangs had strong Kuki elements as suggested by the Tripura chronicler, Rajmala, where the Thongnangs were given to be the Kukis. The Mayangs of Basa who were later called Basi (Pasi), were an admixture of Bodo, Thado and other Tibeto-Burmans possibly with Tai elements who later got mixed with the Bangals and proto-Bangals. When all the original Mayang tribes assumed new appellations like *Kachari* who were Bodos inhabited in Cachar and North-Cachar, *Tripuris (Takhen)* who were Bodos inhabited in Tripura, *Koch* who were Bodos inhabited in Cooch Behar etc. and when all the Mayang tribes had begun to lose their old appellations, the name Mayang was gradually shifted to their politically associated tribes e.g. Bangals and proto-Bangals. The Mayang Pasis got not only ethnically mixed with Bangals and proto-Bangals but their dialect too was to a great extent altered. We find name of girls like Mayee Thumbi who was the daughter of a Pasi chief who lived in the closing part of the 13th century A.D., where *Mayee* is a Bangal or proto-Bangal word and *thumbi* is a Tibeto-Burman word.

Another factor for the transfer of the name Mayang to the Bangals was the arrival of an altogether different stock of Bangals in the year 1606 A.D. They were Muhamadans from Bengal, and since they were also Bangals people used to call them Bangal (Pangal). The name Bangal (Pangal) continued to be applied to the

Muhamadans only because of confusion of Muhamadans and non-Muhamadan Bangals, when the earlier Bangals and proto-Bangals became Meiteis, the proper Bangals and proto-Bangals were fallen into the category of Mayangs. Now the word Pangal (Bangal) has become a vocabulary in modern Manipuri language meaning Muhamadans irrespective of their ethnic origins. Even a classic Mongoloid who is a follower of Islam religion is a Pangal (Bangal). It may be noted that the old pronunciation Pangal is retained to the Mussalmans. This is the history of words as pointed out by Prof. Syce. Thus, like the transfer of Bangal (Pangal) who was originally Bengalis to the followers of Islam religion irrespective of ethnic origins, the name of a Tibeto-Burman tribe Mayang too was transferred to non-Mongoloid Indians as discussed above. When all are forgotten true Mayang origins in the Meitei set up contemptuously refer to the people of Bangal and proto-Bangal origins as Mayang origin. In the Meitei set up the maximum Mayang elements are present in the Mangang and Khuman clans besides people of Pasi origins, only the difference is that true Mayang in Mangang which is also a cognate tribe of Mayang, got mixed with people of Mongoloid origins and became inconspicuous with the general Mongoloid people whereas the Mayang in the Khuman clan and Pasi got mixed with dark skinned non-Mongoloid people.

## THE BANGAL

The people of this land called Bangal *Bangal* in early days. The early people of this land did not pronounce *Ba*, they pronounced it as *Pa*. So Bangal was pronounced as *Pangal*. The literary account Ningthourol Lambuba mentions Bangal settlements. In one occasion the said text mentions one Bangal village located on some flattened hill tops lying between the source of the Khuga river and the meeting point of the Koubareng and Areng streams indicating the location was a watershed, on southern side of this land. The Bangal village was detected by Nongyai Thingkonhanba, a Khuman chieftain whose principality was on the south-east of the Loktak lake. Nongyai Thingkonhanba<sup>1</sup> (c. 1290-1310 A.D.) led an expedition towards the south along the source of the Khuga river where he found the Bangal village named Mara.<sup>2</sup> Further the text also mentions that the Bangal village was not a small one but a 'principal' village and it was ruled by a Bangal chief named Kala Raja who had a son named Maratal Atul.

In another occasion the said text mentions a Bangal village located on the western side of the valley. It was probably at Lamangdong and its adjoining areas, even though the text mentions neither the name of the village nor the exact location except 'Bangal village situated on the western side'. The said Bangal village is mentioned in connection with the collection of some tops found playing by the Bangals in that Bangal village during the reign of Loitongba<sup>3</sup> (c. 1336-1346 A.D.).

Moreover anthropometry and genetic survey of the living people of Lamangdong and its adjoining areas would clearly indicate the presence of Bangal elements

1. Ningthourol Lambuba : edited by O. Bhogeswar Singh, page-73.
2. *ibid.*, page-74.
3. *ibid.*, page-84.

So we shall examine critically the history of the people of Bengal for the period immediately prior to the period 1290-1310 A.D. We do not find any indication of the presence of the Bangals in the 12 century A. D. Hence we will investigate the said history from about 1200 A.D.

The Sena dynasty . In 1200 A. D. Bengal was ruled by Lakshmana Sena of the Sena dynasty of Bangal. The Sena dynasty was founded by Samanta Sena who came from a Kanarese speaking area of Karnataka. He belonged to the so-called Brahman-Kshetriya caste. Samanta Sena was a distinguished person in warfare. In his old age he came to Bengal and settled on the bank of the Ganges as ordinary peaceful settlers. However his son Hemanta Sena carved out a principality. The greatness of the dynasty was contributed by Vijaya Sena son of Hemanta Sena. He ousted the Palas and became a monarch of Bengal. Vijaya Sena was succeeded by Ballala Sena. When Ballala Sena died, he was succeeded by his son Lakshmana Sena.

It is said in some fabulous accounts that Bishambhar Sur the king of Mithila fled towards Bengal in the event of Buktiyar's invasion of Bihar, and requested Lakshmana Sena who was in Nadia for assylum but the latter refused on the apprehension that the granting of assylum to Bishambhar Sur could arouse the wrath of the powerful Muhamadan general. In 1203 A.D., according to other accounts, instead of preparing to defend his country or kingdom, Lakshmana Sena performed great sacrifices on the advice of his Brahmin counsellors to propitiate gods for help in averting a catastrophe of a possible invasion by Buktiyar Khilji also known as Iktiyar-Ud-Din. In some accounts Buktiyar Khilji is described to be the son of Iktiyar-ud-Din. Lakshmana Sena is said to be a young man in 1203 A.D. according to some historians, but Dr. R.C. Mazumdar says that he was 80 years old on that date. The news of successes of Buktiyar Khilji soon reached the ears of the Senas. Sometime in 1204-5 A.D. Buktiyar Khilji started at the head of a big army and suddenly appeared in Nadia which was one of the capitals of the Senas, the other capital was at Lakhnauti.

Nadiya was the residence of the Sena kings. It is said that only 18 horsemen accompanied Buktiyar Khilji to Nadia and the rest of his army was left behind. In this camouflage the people of Nadiya took him to be a trader who brought horses for sale. Thus the general reached the gate of the palace of the king and immediately attacked and killed some people when the king was at his lunch. All on a sudden a cry was raised at the gate of the palace, and before the king could ascertain what was happening at the gate the Mussalman general reached inside the palace and killed many guards. The king fled barefooted by the back door leaving his whole treasures, all his wives, maid servants, attendants and women in the hand of the invaders. When the main army arrived the whole city was brought under subjugation. Lakshmana Sena escaped to east Bengal after crossing the Ganges where he is said to have ruled for some years.

The legends of '18 horsemen' conquest<sup>4</sup> and the young age of Lakshmana Sena at the time of Buktiyar Khilji are denied by several historians including Dr. R. C. Mazumdar. Therefore, they feel it was an exaggeration, and Lakshmana Sena was defeated only in the hands of the entire army of Buktiyar Khilji. After fleeing

4 Dr. Habibulla comments that the kingdom of Lakshmana Sena was very weak and was 'anything but a force that could put up sustained frontal resistance' which is also admitted by Dr. R. C. Mazumdar. He further states, "The case with which the king was put to flight and the city occupied (by 18 horsemen), must have surprised even Buktiyar himself.

(Only the detailed account of Muslim invasion of Bengal, is supplied by a historical work composed by Maulana Minh-ud-din. He went to Lakhnauti formerly the other capital of the Senas in the year 1242 A.D. and stayed there for two years. During that period he collected information on the raids of Nadia from 'trustworthy persons'. While narrating the story he inserted the story of the birth of Rai Lakshmaniya whose seat of government was in Nadia and further said Rai Lakshmaniya had been on the throne for 80 years. Dr. Habibulla writes, "But the apprehension of an impending catastrophe was undoubtedly felt, for epigraphic evidence shows the king in his 25th year (in 1203 A.D.) performed great sacrifices to propitiate the gods for help in averting it". He however does not elaborate about the epigraphy.



from Nadia, Lakshmana Sena set up a capital near Daoca in eastern Bengal where he ruled for sometime. He was succeeded by his two sons namely Viswarupa Sena and Kesava Sena. They further claim that the Sena dynasty continued to rule upto the latter part of the 13th century A.D.

Buktiyar Khilji did not plan to conquer the whole of Bengal but set on an ambitious expedition of conquering Tibet. However he met failures. By 1206 A.D. the whole of western Bengal was under the control of Ali Maram who was the governor of Bengal under the Delhi Sultanate. He became very powerful and soon he declared independence of Bengal in the year 1210 A.D following the death of Qutab-Ud-Din and took the title Ala-Ud-din.

According to Dr. Mazumdar the date of conquest of Nadia is provisionally fixed in the year 1202 A.D. Taking the longevity of Lakshmana Sena to be about 84 years and other chronological dates<sup>5</sup> of the Sena kings as reconstructed by Dr. Mazumdar and proceed investigations, as done in the case of Pakhangba in the section on Treatment on Kumbaba, we get figures which are very unreasonable as we go upto Samanta Sena. However they disappear if we take the reigning period of Vijaya Sena to be 32 years as against 62 years. Even then the tendency of the Sena kings to be living very long is not reduced. All the Sena kings had to live successively very long years which is hard to believe.

Lakshmana Sena is said to have died sometime after 1205 A.D. He was succeeded by Viswarupa Sena and reigned for 14 years in their new capital which they called Vikrampura. Viswarupa Sena

5. History of Bengal, Vol. I, page-231 ; edited by Dr. R. C. Mazumdar.

<i>Name of king</i>	<i>known duration of reign</i>	<i>Year of accession</i>
Vijaya Sena	62 ( ? or 32 )	A.D. 1095 (1125)
Vallalasena	21	1158
Lakshmanasena	28	1179
Viswarupasena	14	1206
Kesavasena	3	1224

probably had two sons namely Surya Sena and Purusottoma Sena.<sup>6</sup> It may be noted that Lakshmana Sena is said to have died at the age of 84 years. Hence it is reasonable to presume that his son Viswarupa Sena was well near about 60 years of age or above and reigned another 14 years. So when Viswarupa Sena died, his son must have been at least in his early fifties or sixties. Thus Surya Sena was reasonably well in his early fifties. But in the records of Viswarupa Sena the prefix 'Kumar' was added to the names of his sons.<sup>7</sup> It is therefore very likely that Surya Sena and Purusottoma Sena were not old men, they must have been young men presumably in their early teens and had not yet entered the family life when the record was issued. Records reveal that neither Surya Sena nor Purusottoma Sena succeeded Viswarupa Sena, but their uncle Kesava Sena succeeded after an interregnum of 5 years in the year 1224 A.D.

Since then nothing is known either of Surya Sena or of Purusottoma Sena. It is presumed that the descendants of Sena princes ruled upto 1245 A.D. or 1260 A.D. relying on Minhaj's account

**Ballala Charita** - It is a piece of literary work depicting the activities of Ballala Sena. In this text the kingdom of Manipur is mentioned. Ballala Charita was composed in the year 1510 A.D. by Anandabatta, a Brahmin scholar believed to be of South Indian origin, at the command of Buddhanta Khan, a prominent and influential ruler of Nadia or Nabadwip. The text available today was edited by Haraprasad Sastri and published by the Asiatic Society of Bengal in the year 1904 A.D. The text has three sections namely Purva khanda, Uttarakhanda and Parisista. The story of the first section is as follows :

"Once Vallala Sena borrowed a crore of rupees (niskha) from Vallabhananda, the richest merchant of his time for the purpose of the conquering king of Udantapura, but repeatedly defeated in

6. *ibid.*, page-227.

7. *ibid.*, page-229.

the battle in the neighbourhood of Manipur (Fanipur), he determined a grand effort and sent a messenger to Vallava, who was a resident of Sankakota, demanding a fresh loan. The demand was made with the following preamble : 'Because it has become absolutely necessary for us to march against the country of *Kika-tas* with a grand army composed of six divisions Vallava should immediately send a crore and a half *Suvarnas*'. In reply Vallava agreed to pay the money only if the revenues of Harikeli were assigned to him of the debts. This enraged Vallala Sena who forcibly took possession of the wealth of a large number of Vaniks (merchants) and inflicted other hardship on them ....".<sup>8</sup>

The Deva dynasty The kingdom of Deva dynasty comprised Noakhali, Tippera and Chittagong The founder of this dynasty is said to be one Madhumanthana Deva, son of Purusottoma who is said to have descended from the Moon The ethnic origin of these rulers is not known Purusottoma is therefore the founder of the dynasty Madhumanthana set up an independent kingdom shortly before or after the fall of Nadia in the hands of Buktiyar Khilji in the year 1202 A D or so

Madhumanthana Deva was succeeded by his son Vasudeva. It appears from about the time of Vasudeva the kingdom grew to power. He was succeeded by his son Damodara Deva. He issued Grants in the year 1231 A D. corresponding to his 4th regnal year. He became a very powerful ruler. They maintained their kingdom upto the latter part of the 13th century A D. The rise of this power may be attributed to the downfall of the Sena power. Dasaratha Deva possibly the immediate successor of Damodara Deva conquered Vikrampura the last Sena capital

The Deva dynasty was a follower of Vaisnavism. They did not follow Saivism or Buddhism.

The Pattikera principality : The existence of a small principality in the district of Tippera lying to the west of modern

8. *ibid.*, page-240.

Tripura and to the north of Moakhali is traced as far back as the 11th century A.D. The Burmese chronicles also refer to this principality. The chronicle narrates a romantic episode of the prince of Pattikera and princess Swinithi, the daughter of Kyansitha of Burma, who reigned from 1084 to 1112 A.D. In that story princess Swinithi's love for the prince of Pattikera had to be sacrificed for the welfare of the state at the cost of her lover's life. Later, her son Alaungsithu married a princess of Pattikera. Narathu, the son and successor to Alaungsithu, killed his step-mother, the princess of Pattikera.

In the Arakanese chronicle a certain king Pateikera of the kingdom of Mara(w) sent his two daughters to the king of Arakan and Tapadia one respectively to each king as presents. The general of Arakan sent the latter princess to Pagan requesting king Narathu to send her to Tapadia. Narathu detained the princess. The princess rebuked Narathu for the disgraceful act which enraged him and he killed the princess.

On hearing the murder of his daughter the king of Pateikera (Pattikera) sent eight soldiers under the guise of Brahmins to avenge the crime. When they arrived at Pagan they introduced to king Narathu for blessings on him. Taking advantage of the situation, they drew out swords and killed Narathu. Later they committed suicide.

So far neither the name of the Pattikera prince nor the name of the Pattikera princess is mentioned. The Burmese and the Arakanese accounts even though agreeing in sequence, differ in details. It is therefore difficult to regard them as authentic historical accounts.

However a copper plate found in the neighbourhood of Comilla proves the existence of the kingdom of Pattikera in the first half of the 13th century A.D. In that copper plate inscription, it is recorded grants of land in favour of a Buddhist monastery built in the city of Pattikera by king Ranavankamalla Sri Harikaladeva in 1220 A.D. in his 17th regnal year. There is no record for how

many more years the said king ruled in Pattikera after the above date and since then nothing is heard of this kingdom.

It is generally believed that the kingdom was absorbed or destroyed by the growing power of another kingdom ruled by the Deva dynasty which was close to this principality as discussed above.

The earliest reference of this kingdom or principality is found in a manuscript of Asthasabassika Prajnaparnamita preserved in the library of Cambridge University.<sup>9</sup> The said manuscript is said to have been copied in the year 1015 A.D. and contains a picture of a sixteen armed Buddhist goddess Chunda with the label of 'Pattikera Chunda Varabhabane Chunda'. It is clearly seen from all these records that the kingdom of Pattikera followed Hinayana Buddhism and the king was a Buddhist as referred to in the copper plate is also confirmed.

On the north of Pattikera, near or at present Sylhet there was probably one principality of the Cambodian tribes known as Harikela or Harikola. They were Austric people distinctly different from Bangal and proto-Bangal of that period.

Besides the above mentioned three dynasties there were other more principalities which are geographically too far. They are not discussed here. The Bangal prince who entered Manipur at about 1225 A.D. must have been possibly from any one of the above mentioned three dynasties. We sum up as follows :

(1) Pattikera king . The time of the decay of this principality is very synchronous with the arrival of the Bangal prince in Imphal valley. The Pattikera kingdom decayed sometime after 1220 A.D. and arrival of the Bangal king is estimated to be about 1225 A.D. which will be seen in subsequent sections. But one serious point of contradiction is the religion. The Bangal prince who settled in Manipur was probably a follower of Saivism which will be seen in the section on Religion, whereas the king of Pattikera was a devout Buddhist. So it is very doubtful that he

9. *ibid.*, page-257.

would change his allegiance so suddenly to Saivism. Hence there is less possibility of the Bangal prince to be Pattikera prince.

(2) Deva king : The Deva dynasty was progressing rapidly by about the period under consideration. It is doubtful that a Deva prince would desert his own kingdom at about 1220 A.D. and migrate for an unknown destination. However there is no impossibility of a Deva prince leaving his kingdom and moving for an unknown destination because of family feuds. The Deva kings followed Vaisnavism with Vishnu cult. Saivism is nearer to Tantricism and a vaisnavite would hardly perform the rituals of Tantricism. The fresh Saivism brought by the Bangal princes was also followed by king Khongtekcha (c 1250-60 A.D.), the son of Naothingkhong. So the possibility of the Bangal prince to be a Deva prince is rather too far.

(3) Sena king The religion of the Sena kings from Lakshmana Sena and his successors onwards followed Saivism and at the same time had a leaning towards the Vishnu cult. "Although Lakshmana Sena and his successors begin their inscriptions by invoking Narayana, they do not forget to pay their homage to Sadasiva, the family deity", —Dr. Mazumdar. The Bangal prince who settled at Lamangdong on the southern part of Imphal valley followed the same religion. The dilapidated Vishnu temple at Lamangdong, is believed by some scholars to have been built during the reign of king Khongtekcha. However this view is not free from doubt. There is every possibility of the Vishnu temple being constructed nearly two centuries later at about 1470 A.D. during the reign of Kiyamba. More details are discussed in the section on Kiyamba in volume II.

Taking into consideration of the above investigations, it is seen that the Bangal prince who entered Imphal valley and settled at Lamangdong was none but a Sena prince.

Moirang account : In Moirang Ningthourol Lambuba, a chronicle of the Moirang rulers, it is mentioned that Thangjing Koirel

Lai, the founder of the Moirang principality, while inhabiting on the hill now known as the Thangjing hill after his name, paid a visit to the plains where the 'aristocratic Bangals inhabited' by riding on a horse. The text states, "*mayang sakan tongba, Pangal tampak koipa, iyu Mahui ningthou, Pangal tharak menongtonglei-pu,*"<sup>10</sup> meaning 'riding on horse back, visited the plains of Bangal, my lord king of Mahui, the land of Bangals who travelled on palanquine'. This account clearly indicates that the Bangal rulers were aristocratic people like the great kings, queens, princes, and princesses of that period under consideration. Thangjing Koirel Lai belonged to a Lai tribe which is said to be a degenerated Tai tribe of *Marquis of Lo* origin. The visit of Thangjing Koirel Lai to the Bangal settlement is estimated to be sometime in the latter part of A.D 1250's. Details are discussed in the section on Moirang. From this text it is seen that the plain where the Bangals settled was not far from the Thangjing hill since Thangjing Koirel Lai scaled the Bangal settlement by simply riding on a pony.

Pong account. We do not have a precise authentic date of Samlungfa's invasion of Manipur from the Manipuri source. The date found in the Manipuri account Cheitharol Kumbaba is a forged one. Samlungfa came from Mogaung to the northern Arakan first and then to Manipur via Pasa (Basa). The departure of Samlungfa from Mogaung is probably in the year 1220 A.D. when his father Aimokhamng died and was succeeded by his elder brother Sukanpha in the year 1220 A.D. at Mong Mao. Samlungfa had already become a *Sawbwa* in 1215 A.D.<sup>11</sup> at Mogaung under his father. No doubt it is a long route from Mogaung, a town on the bank of the Namkhong river, a western tributary of the Irrawaddy river, to northern Arakan but it may not take several months provided that Samlungfa did not

10. Moirang Ningthourol Lambuba, edited by O. Bhogeswar Singh, page-1.

11. Dr. Gogo: Tai and the Tai kingdoms, page-155.

stay long periods at every station and at the same time if there were no resistances. In that expedition he was not opposed anywhere till he reached Imphal valley. In Imphal valley too he was not opposed. Relying on the Shan dates which is dependable, Samlungfa must have arrived at Basa at least by about the same year i.e. 1220 A.D.

The Bengal dates too are also provisionals. Viswarupa Sena ruled upto 1219 A.D., then followed an interregnum of 5 years before Kesava Sena ascended. If Surya Sena and Parusottoma Sena left Vikrampura by about 1219 A.D. for some reason or the other as the accounts are silent about the interregnum of 5 years, as in most historical accounts such kingless periods are generally attributed to quarrels and feuds over the succession. The two accounts are quite compatible. The Senas seem to have reached the Mayang (a Tibeto-Burman tribe) settlement on the east of Rangamati by about the same year. The Bangals gave the name *Basa* meaning 'temporary shelter or habitation' to that settlement. The word *Basa* is a Bangal origin which the neo-Burmese or the Tibeto-Burman called *Pasa*. It appears in that settlement, before the arrival of the Bangals there were proto-Bangals who mixed with the Mayangs. These proto-Bangals seem to be the inhabitants of the Pattakera principality who had the knowledge of the topography of northern Arakan. The arrival of Samlungfa on the above date is quite reasonable.

The Bangals after staying at Basa, an oasis of human settlement in a vast area of uninhabited land, and the Basis i.e. the inhabitants of Basa, moved en masse towards Imphal valley and settled at Lamangdong. The arrival of the Basis at Lamangdong is provisionally fixed at about 1225 A.D.

A question arises, why in Ballala Charita the kingdom of Manipur is mentioned. People of that time or scholars who developed the said text, must have heard something happened in or in the neighbourhood of Manipur some two or three centuries earlier in vague terms. It will be discussed in the latter part of this book.



that at about 1260 A.D. there was a serious clash arising out of hostility between the Kege principality near present Moirang and the Bangal principality at Lamangdong.

In the latter days of Khongtekcha (c. 1250-60 A.D.), it is believed that the greatest war ever in the early history of the Meiteis broke out. The last phase of the war was between the Keges and Poireis in which 763 Keges according to Ningthourol Lambuba<sup>12</sup> and 63 according to Cheitharol Kumbaba<sup>13</sup> were killed. In Cheitharol Kumbaba the name of the tribe is given as Moirang. It is not appropriate to use the name Moirang at this stage and it will be discussed in the section on Moirang. The two accounts do not mention any casualty on the side of the Poireis. It is doubtful that in a battle of small tribal powers when one side loses to the order of 763 or 63 men the other side does not suffer any casualty. There must have been a sizeable number of casualties on the side of the Poireis too. It is seen frequently that the chroniclers do not record their disgrace or defeat. By that period the loss of 3 or 4 men was a serious defeat. It cannot be estimated from the perspective of later periods. So it is seen that the invasion of the Keges and its aftermath was a catastrophe. There was an interregnum of 11 years as the Cheitharol Kumbaba says following the death of Khongtekcha. It is also not known whether Khongtekcha was killed by the Keges in that war. The accounts are silent about the interregnum.

Just before the war with the Poireis, it seems the Keges first attacked the Bangal principality of Lamangdong and totally uprooted it. After destroying the Lamangdong principality the Keges invaded the Poireis. Then came the encounter with the Poireis as stated above at a place which was known as *Kege-lou-tangka*. We have very limited accounts of the clashes between

12. Ningthourol Lambuba, edited by O. Bhogswar Singh, page-46.

13. Cheitharol Kumbaba, published by the Manipuri Sahitya Parishad, page-3.

the different tribes except with the Poireis. Only some antecedents and flash back feedings can reveal events.

Truely speaking it was a real catastrophe totally destroying a principality. Those Bangals who fled as far as Chittagong and settled somewhere near Rangamati must have narrated the awful story to others and the information could have spread to other parts of Bengal in vague terms.

The Bangals were driven out by the Keges. The reference of *Kika-tas* in the Ballala Charita must have an application. The *Kika-(ta)* tribe mentioned in the Ballala Charita is not found in any part of India upto the time of Ballala Charita or even to this date. The earlier Meitei pronunciation of Kege is *Keke* and *Kika* is perhaps the Bangal style of that name. It may be mentioned here that the people of southern Yun-nan who were of Chinese origin and southern Yun-nun itself and later the whole of the Chinese were called *Kha-ki* meaning 'southern-Ki' by the Poireis. It is therefore seen that the people of Chinese or gin were called by various names like *Ki*, *Ki-ka*, *Khe* etc. And again the suffix *-ta* of *Kika-ta* is a northern Indian suffix originated from the Himalayan Mongoloids and adopted by other Indian tribes. So the name *Kika-ta* referred to in the Ballala Charita is the Meitei name *Kcke*. The place name Harikela mentioned in the text is said to be Sylhet. According to I-tsing, Harikela was the eastern limit of East India. "The evidence of the Chinese writer is confirmed by that of Karupu-manjuri (9th century A. D.) which includes Harikela girls among women of the east".<sup>14</sup> "It has been recently pointed out by a young writer that the Manjuri-Mulakala mentions Harikela, Vanga and Samanta as distinct entities and that in two manuscripts in the Dacca University collections, Harikola, that is possibly Harikela, is synonymous with Sylhet".<sup>15</sup> Udantapur is presumably the northern Arakan country in western Burma, however a somewhat similars place named Uddandapur is

14. History of Bengal, Vol. I, page-17, edited by R.C. Mazumdar

15. *ibid.*, page-18.

found in Bihar. The part of Ballala Charita which deals with this topic is the Purva-khanda. All these materials clearly suggest the country Manipur mentioned in the said text is present Manipur precisely the Imphal valley.

Most Indian people from about the 8th century A.D. took a kingdom Manipur to be lying to the west of the kingdom of Mayura Dhaja. The kingdom of Dhaja Raja the Maurya or Mayura Dhaja was in Upper Irrawady valley called Tagaung. The Mauryan kingdom started its existence from about 200 B.C. though the Burmese chronicle claims it to be from 923 B.C. This Mauryan kingdom was renovated by Mayura Dhaja at about 248 A.D. Dhaja Raja gave Tagaung another name, Panchala. The territory of the ancient kingdom of Manipur began immediately from the west of the kingdom of Mayura Dhaja. The concept of the name applied to that country is perhaps the result of an addition of a full-fledged chapter Aswamedha Parva<sup>16</sup> in the Mahabharata epic by Jaimini who is said to be a 8th century A.D. scholar. The capital of Jaimini's Manipur was the valley now known as the Kabow valley. More details may be seen in the section on naming the land Manipur. The concept of Anandabhatta was perhaps that the kingdom of Manipur was ruled by Aryan princes who were the descendants of Arjuna, the Pandava. In the text Ballala Charita the revenge wanted by the Sena king was on the tribe *Kika-tas* for the humiliation he suffered in their hands. It may be noted that the Keke (Kika) ruler who expelled the Bangal from Lamangdong was a Moriya prince named Oinu Seng Raja.<sup>17</sup> The Major power of Imphal valley was Poirei who inhabited the northern part of the valley, and whom the Bangals called Moitai, a name acquired from the Marems.

From the above analysis it is seen that the Bangal prince who was defeated in the hand of Kekes was a Sena prince. When all the vague facts were mixed up, latter text writer took the Sena

16. W. Yumjao Singh : An early History of Manipur, page-24.

17. Ningthourol Lambuba, edited by O. Bhogoswar Singh, page-47.

prince to be Ballala Sena. Although Ballala Charita cannot be taken as a historical account, it throws light on the reconstruction of history like the Puyas of the Meiteis. The information of ruling by a Sena prince at Lamangdong could have infiltrated. So Minhaj while collecting information thought the descendants of Lakshmana Sena continued to rule in some eastern parts of Bengal and assumed that the Senas continued to rule beyond 1245 A.D. It is most likely that the Senas of Bengal were out of power at about 1230 A.D.

In Manipur there is a tradition that there was a king named Surjasen at Lamangdong. Another instance is that there is a village a few kilometres south of Lamangdong originally inhabited by the Bangals, called *Naranseina*. The history how the name of the village was given *Naranseina* is not found. It may not be far too wrong to assume that the original name of the village was *Narayan-Sena* and later deviated to *Naraseina*.

As discussed above, in Moirang Ningthourol Lambuba, it is mentioned that there was a principality in the valley not far from the Thangjing hill in which the aristocratic Bangals ruled where Thangjing Koirel Lai paid a visit on horse back while the Moirangs inhabited on the hills before their coming down to the valley. The text describes the principality as the 'land of aristocratic Bangals'. The coming of the Moirangs in the valley is estimated to be about 1270 A.D.

The above materials clearly prove that the Bangal prince who set up a principality at Lamangdong was none but the Sena prince Surya Sena. While in Lamandong he had alliance with the Poireis by giving princess Chingurembi in marriage to prince Naothingkhong (c. 1215-50 A.D.) of the Poireis. Chingurembi is a titular or any other name given by the Tibeto-Burman Mayang Basis. Her original name is not found. More details may be seen in the section on Chingurembi.

Now we have discovered a lost history and further it may be confirmed by archeology. The Lamangdong site where the said

principality once stood, is a beautiful elevated spot of land. At present some parts of it are occupied by the Police Station, Administrative offices and other institutions. The dilapidated Vishnu temple is still on this site. There is enough room for archeological survey on this site.

The next part of our investigation will be the probable route through which the Sena escaped from their kingdom. There must have been a history of it and therefore we propose a hypothesis from the findings of the following investigations. In Bengal there is a tradition that Bishambhar Sur having being failed to get an assylum in Nadiya changed his mind and became a devotee of the Vishnu and proceeded towards eastern Bengal by boats on pilgrimage. He finally settled at a place called Bhuluya, now known as Noakhali and spent the rest of his life on meditation and worship of the Vishnu.

Most of the fugitives of Bengal escaped along the route leading to the Chittagong hill tracts. The route of the Sena prince could have been the same route as that of Bishambhar Sur.<sup>18</sup> The Sena prince was probably under pressure from all directions and from all angles. After the death of Viswarupa Sena there was an interregnum of 5 years and therefore a family feud is not ruled out. The eldest son of Viswarupa Sena should have succeeded him but his uncle succeeded his father. On the other side the pressure of the Lurks and the rising power of the Deva dynasty possibly compelled the son of Viswarupa Sena to flee towards the east at about 1219 A D. The Chittagong hill tract leading to Burma was well known to the people of eastern Bengal. It is not possible to assess the mind of the Sena prince but it is very likely that he would have liked to set up a principality undisturbed by other forces. However, this land, that is, the Imphal valley, was perhaps unknown to the people of Bengal by that period. So it is reasonable to presume that the Sena prince left his kingdom for Burma and proceeded to Chittagong near Rangamati. When they proceeded

18 Rajmala Tripura chronicle, Vol I, editorial note.

or reached Rangamati they moved towards the east through the penepains of northern Arakan now parts of Mizoram. The route was a mediaeval highway. When they moved further east they got a bifurcation one towards the north and the other towards the south. The southern side or route leads to Arakan and Burma while the northern route leads to Imphal valley. At about this geographically strategic point a settlement of proto-Bangals and Tibeto-Burman Mayangs was located. The name of this settlement is not known when the horde of the Sena prince arrived. They also took shelter in that settlement and gave the name Basa. The location of Basa close to Rangamati is also supported by the Tripura chronicle Rajmala in a fabulous way in which it is stated that king Dharma Manika in the guise of a Kautuka Brahmin came to Basa<sup>19</sup> from Rangamati indicating a close proximity of the two cities. It also further indicates, that though the life of Basa was short, culturally its image continued to live for a long time. The settlement seems to grow immediately to a principality with the Sena prince as their chief. It is most probable that the Bangals conceived the kingdom of Manipur from Jainini's account which had its location to the north-east of Basa. When the city of Basa began to exist a horde of invaders headed by Samlungfa the Pong prince suddenly appeared from the south after conquering northern Arakan. Basa was in an infant stage and did not raise much resistance and at the same time Samlungfa was a noble conqueror. He possibly did not commit any atrocity on the Basis. Samlungfa left them and proceeded towards the north. The Basis continued to live in Basa for sometime. At about 1225 A.D. the Basis finally deserted Basa and moved en masse towards the north along the route of Samlungfa. They probably touched the soil of present political Manipur on the low and flattened hill tops of the Loijing ranges where it formed a watershed between the source of the Khuga river which drains water to Burma through Imphal valley and other streams which drain water to the Barak valley. They continued to march

19. *ibid.*, editorial note.

along the Loiijing ranges and came down to the valley somewhere at or near Lamangdong. Thus they settled at Lamangdong at about 1225 A.D. Knowingly or not knowingly the Bangals took the valley to be a part of the ancient kingdom of Manipur as they conceived, gave the name Manipur to Imphal valley to which their principality of Lamangdong also belonged. They were perhaps the first among the settlers of the Imphal Valley to call this land Manipur

## THE VISHNUPRIYA

The literary accounts frequently refer to a group of people as **Mayang**. It has been discussed in the section on **Mayang** that they originally belonged to a group of neo-Burmese or Tibeto-Burman but later got mixed with the non-Mongoloids. The name remained applied to some dark-skinned tribes at a later period. Before the arrival of the Tibeto-Burmans and neo-Burmans mainly from the east these group of dark-skinned people, are supposed, to have settled in the hilly regions of Chittagong and its adjoining areas. They were proto-Bangals, and are supposed, to become a component of the Basu inhabitants besides **Mayangs**. They settled at Lamangdong as a component of Basu. After flourishing for about three decades in their new homes, the principality was uprooted by the **Kege**s. All the inhabitants of the principality namely Bangals, proto-Bangals, **Mayangs**, and **Pasis** a hybrid of **Mayangs** with Bangals and proto-Bangals, were scattered. All of them took shelter on the Loiing ranges at the beginning of their fleeing. At times of distress different ethnic groups moved separately for their lives, Thus the **Mayang** who were possibly the target of the **Kege**s moved to the *Mayang-hanna-ching* meaning **Mayang-retreat** hill towards Tripura through the hill terrains and gorges in the south-west. A good number of Bangals and proto-Bangals resorted to their old route through which they arrived on this land and reached the south-western part of present Mizoram. Some Bangals, proto-Bangals and **Pasis** continued to stay on the Loiing ranges. While they were on the Loiing ranges they were first detected by Nongyai Thingkonhanba (c 1290-1310 A D) a Khuman chieftain in an expedition on the southern hills. He found a village inhabited by Bangals, possibly proto-Bangals, called **Mara**. The Bangal chief of that village was called **Kala Raja** who had son named **Maratal Atul** (**Maratal Atanba**). They were taken as captives by the Khuman chief. Since then these group of people started coming



down to valley and settled mainly on the south-western part of the valley.

The people of Bangal origin who settled at Lamangdong and south of it were called Pangal ( Bangal ) by the Poireis. There is a historical account of them being called Bangal upto the time of Loitongba (c 1336-46 A D ) Details are discussed in the section on Bangal. The name Bangal remains applied to Bangal and proto-Bangals upto the time of Kiyamba (1467-1508 A D.)

The Vishnu temple of Lamangdong is said to have been constructed by king Kiyamba for the golden image of Vishnu Chakra presented to him by the Pong king Khekkhomba Since the installation of the Vishnu temple, Lamangdong became a centre of Vishnu cult, and Lamangdong was renamed Vishnupur by the Bangals and proto-Bangals. The Vishnu worshiper Bangals and proto-Bangals became, since then, known as Vishnupuriya by adding 'iya' suffix to Vishnupur in the Moriya style The impact of the Moriyian culture appears to be strong in these regions. Perhaps, from the name of *Vishnupuriya* it changed to Vishnupriya Another analysis is also not altogether impossible, since the Bangals were worshipers of Vishnu they were called *Vishnupriya* meaning 'lovers of Vishnu' to differentiate them from the Saivites.

When the Vishnupriyas increased their social intercourse with the Poireis, they were given a nick name *Kalisha* by the Poireis. Before they were called *Kalisha*, it seems they were known as *Kala-cha* The suffix *-cha* is Tibeto-Burman origin, most likely a Bodo origin adopted by other Mongoloid tribes like Mangang, Mayang, Moirang etc These proto-Bangals were much influenced by the Tibeto-Burmans and other neo-Burmese tribes that entered Imphal valley by the southern route In present Meiteilon this suffix *-cha* is found more frequently applied in conjunct with another prefix *ma-* eg *Meitei-macha*, *Mayang-macha* etc. for *Meitei-cha*, *Mayang-cha* etc The meaning *cha* here is 'off-spring' besides small children, issue etc People would speak like 'I am a *Meitei-macha*' to show pride, valour, courage etc. of being a Meitei origin or Meitei off-spring. Thus *Kala-cha* means 'off-spring

of the black' where *kala* means black in the dialect of the proto-Bangals indicating their general dark complexion or from their earlier name. Later, it seems, from the parallel sound formation *Kala-cha* is pronounced as *Kali-sha* a nick name. The name *Kali-sha* is a compound word of *Kali* and *sha* where *Kalo* or *Kala* is a Bangal word meaning 'black' and *sha* a Tibeto-Burman word meaning 'animal'. Thus *Kali-sha* means 'black-animal'. The Poireis used the word '*kali*' to mean the deepest black like lamp black.

When the name *Kalisha* became popular, these proto-Bangals also called themselves *Kalasha* in their own way. Name is generally given by the second or the third person and it is frequently seen in history that the nick name given to a tribe becomes the general name of the tribe e.g. Khasi or Khasiya is a nick name given to a group of Mon-Khmer speech Synteng who were already known as Jayantiya, by the Kacharis.

The suffix *-iya* was further added to *Kala-cha* or *Kalisha* as done in other cases and became *Kalacha-iyā* or *Kalisha-iyā*. British scholars usually pronounced it as *Khalachaiya*<sup>1</sup> in their own phonetic way. It may be mentioned here that the British word *Khalachaiya* is interpreted by some scholars to have derived from the word *Khe-la-chai* where the word *Khe-la-cha* means lake-wide-children indicating *Khalachaiyas* were the inhabitants of the great Loktak lake.<sup>2</sup> These scholars even have gone to the extent of saying that Meiteis are people of Thailand coming from central China and believe the Meiteis were the later immigrants.

1. The linguistic survey of India, Grierson, Vol. III part III, page-20.

"There is also a degraded class called *Khalachaiya* or *Bishnupriya* which consists of the descendants of doms and other Bengali of low caste. Their occupation were originally that of supplying grass to the royal stables. They speak a language which is different from that of true Manipuri and is, in fact closely allied to vulgar Bengali".

2. An article appearing in the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* publication of the 2nd February 1984 A.D. under the caption "Language war in NE region" as news item gave comments on the origin of the *Vishnupriyas*. It is stated in that article that, "According to Raj Mohan Nath a distinguished historian of the North-east, Manipuris are divided into two main tribes

All these are assumptions with no historical foundation. There is also no impossibility of the word *Kala-chaiya* deriving from *Kala-churiya* which will be seen in the latter part of this section.

When the name *Mayang* became exclusively applied to the non-Mongoloid Indian people, *Kalishas* were called '*Mayang-Kalishas*. Like *Kalisha*, the *Takens* (*Tripuris*) were also called *Akok-sha*. It appears the *Vishnupriyas* in the twentieth century did not like the name *Kalisha*, they also gave a nick name *Meitei-sha* to the *Meiteis*

There is no concrete historical material to trace the ethnic origin of the *Vishnupriyas* except that of the anthropological finds and the dialect of the living *Vishnupriyas*. The dialect of the *Vishnupriyas* clearly belongs to the Indo-Aryan group of language, and has similarity with the *Bengali*, *Oriya* and *Assamese*. It also contains words of *Manipuri* origin.

The area of characterisation of the *Magadhan* family of speeches namely *Oriya*, *Bengali* and *Assamese* besides *Mithila*, *Magahi* and *Bhojpuriya*, is the area covered by the north, south-west and central *Bihar*, eastern *Uttarpradesh* and possibly some north-western parts of *Bengal*. The Indo-Aryan language may be divided

*Kha-la-chai*, who called themselves '*Bishnupriyas*' are supposed to have been the first ruling race and *Mitis* (possibly a printing mistake for *Meitei*) who called themselves real *Manipuris* are supposed to have been the next immigrants".

Further the scholar is said to have stated, "*Khelachai* (*Khe-lake*, *la-wide*, *chais-children*) evidently means children of the wide lake (*Loktak*) and probably referred to the race of the people who lived in the plain portion of *Manipur* valley, *Mitis* or people of *Thais* (*Thai*) land coming from *China*"

It may be noted that the meaning of *Khe-la-chai* may be interpreted in several ways befitting the tribe besides the meaning given by *Mr. Nath*. *Khe* means (1) dog, (2) people of *Yun-nan* of Chinese origin, (3) noisy, (4) a kind dark brown resin, (5) choking with vibrating sound etc.; *la* means (1) leaf, (2) plantain leaf, (3) an elevated flat table-land, (4) a flat circular piece of bamboo matting used for drying paddy etc. *cha* means (1) a kind of resin 'lac', (2) to eat, (3) to be thinning away etc.

It is thus possible to prepare a set of meanings befitting the tribe,

into three stages depending on periods namely (1) First stage or Old Indo-Aryan speech covering the period from 1500 B.C. to 600 B.C. representing Vedic and early Sanskrit, (2) Second stage or Middle-Indo Aryan speech covering the period from 600 B.C. to 1000 A.D. representing Pali and Prakrit, and (3) Third stage or New Indo-Aryan speech covering the period from 1000 A.D. to this date representing a phase of dying out of Apabhramsa and imergence of vernaculars or Modern Indo-Aryan languages.

The formation of the Vishnupriya speech, as stated earlier, shows that it belongs to the family of Oriya, Bengali and Assamese, still closer to Old Bengali which some scholars describe to vulgar Bengali. The isolation of the Vishnupriyas from the rest of family of Language and at the same time lack of proper patronage due to want of political nucleus, the metamorphosis of the dialect seems to be slow its having strong impact of Tibeto-Burmans which constituted the Meiteis.

It is evident from the speech formation that the Vishnupriyas were at one time inhabitants of the above stated area of speech characterisation at least upto the 11th century A.D. It is likely that the dialect of Vishnupriyas when they entered the territory of the ancient kingdom of Manipur was the stage of their dialect of about 1150 A.D. They cannot be expected in the territory of the ancient kingdom of Manipur much earlier than the middle of the 12th century A.D. Their entry is estimated to be about 1225 A.D. The formation of Bengali language is said to be in the 11th century A.D.

The anthropological finds in conjunct with speech formation, it is certain that there is a common base in Vishnupriya with Oriya, Bengali and Assamese (non-Ahoms). The Bengali people of this date is generally believed to be Austro-Asiatic super-imposed by a layer of Dravidoids and followed by a layer of Tibeto-Burmans. This indicates the earliest layer is Austro-Asiatic. In this connection a new hypothesis may be suggested that the earliest layer is Dravidoid

superimposed by a thick layer of Himalayan Mongoloids possibly some cognate tribes of Sakya, then followed by another layer of Austro-Asiatic tribes and finally a coating of Tibeto-Burmans of Bodo origin.

There are two waves of Austro-Asiatic people entering India as against the general belief of a single wave in early B. C. The two waves are spanned by about one thousand years. The first wave is more likely in the closing part of the first millenium B. C. or beginning of the Christian era where these tribes from Cambodia are supposed to move as far as Bay of Bengal in course of the expansion of the Funan empire. The second wave is found in about the 10th century A D. which entered Manipur, and north-eastern parts of India, possibly some as far as the Brahmaputra Valley where they got mixed with the Bodos. This is perhaps the reason why some names of rivers, or places are found in Upper Assam to have been associated with Austro-Asiatic and Bodo words e g. Di-hong which is a name of a river where *Di* is a Bodo word for water, and *hong* is an Austro-Asiatic word for water. These occurrences led to the popular belief that these Austro-Asiatic tribes were the earliest layer or stratum of Assam. More details may be seen in the section on Funan, Maling and Mon-Khmer.

Some scholars believe that these Austro-Asiatic people entered Bengal through the north-east of Assam from their ancestral home of the Mon in central China and they were the earliest inhabitants of Assam and Bengal. The tribes inhabiting western Bengal are described to be barbarous upto the time of Mahavir Jain. In Jain tradition, "it is stated in *Acharanga sutra* that when Mahavir Jain travelled in the 'pathless country' of the Ladhas in Vrajabhumi and Subhabhumi, many natives attacked him and dogs ran at him. Few people kept off the attacking beast. Striking the monk they cried *chu chhu* and made the dog bite him". It may be noted that *chuchhu* (s-shu) and *chu-i chu-i* are command words for dogs to attack a person or so and command word for animals to fight among themselves respectively in Manipuri.

Some foreign scholars gave very unhealthy comments on the race and the dialects of the Vishnupriyas, stating that they belonged to low caste Bengali like *doom* and their dialect closely akin to 'vulgar' Bengali. But the Vishnupriyas never claim that they were Bengalis. As an insult to injury the Meiteis who boast themselves with a false pride that they are the highest race also call them *sajikloys* meaning 'grass-suppliers' from the fact that they once adopted to the profession of supplying grass for the royal stable, and some local pandits shout with a superior tone that they were *lanphas* meaning 'war-captives'. In fact there is no impossibility among such pandits being a descendant either in paternal line who at one time or the other adopted a profession much humbler than that of the Vishnupriyas, or who inherited the Vishnupriya genes through socially approved or illicit sources in them since the Vishnupriya elements in the Meitei set up are inseparable, or who were of *lanphas*.

Among the Vishnupriyas there is a family title called Sena, but they usually write Sen in the Bengali style. The Sen families do not claim that they are Vishnupriyas or Vishnupriya descents, but they claim that they are Manipuris. There is no impossibility of these families to be the surviving progenies of the Senas of Bengal provided that they do not adopt the name out of fancy. However the Meiteis feel them to be of a *Kitna* descent.

It may be expedient to investigate what was the earlier name of the Vishnupriyas. The name of the village in the southern hills of Manipur where these proto Baugals lived in the latter half of the 13th century A. D. is found to be called Mara as stated earlier. There is no historical account how the name *Mara* was given to that village. The name of that chief's son is Mara-tal Atul. The prefix Mara in the name of the chief's son must have a meaning and application. There is a neo-Burmese tribe who called themselves Mar or Hmar inhabiting the southern hills of Manipur to this date. This tribe is somewhat akin to Mayang a neo-Burmese or Tibeto-Burman tribe. In 1660 A. D. Van Den Brouke in his map of eastern India, has shown a city named *Mara*

to have located to the south of the Tropic of Cancer, to the south-east of Comilla near Benolia on the eastern bank of an unnamed river. In early days name of a city or principality is generally associated with name of the tribe or ruler inhabiting the city or principality. The area of Mara shown on the map represents the area of settlement of some of the Vishnupriyas when they were expelled from Lamangdong by the Keges.

The name *Mara* is also found in the Arakanese and Burmese chronicles as *Maraw* or *Marawa*. As discussed in earlier sections, one prince of Pattikera had a love affair with princess Sweintthi the daughter of Kyanzittha born by his wife Thambula. It is also said that the kingdom of Anawrahta (1044-77 A.D.) the predecessor and supposed father of Kyanzittha according to Hmannan was bounded on the west by Pattikera, 'the country of *Kalas*'. The name *Kalu* is interpreted by some scholars as 'foreigner'. As discussed above, it is more likely that the word is derived from the complexion of the inhabitants of that principality or from the earlier name of the tribe. They were mostly dark complexioned people and the name *Kala* meaning black was given to them. Hence the name *Kala* became the name of the tribe. The name of the chief of Mara village subdued by Nongyai Thinkonbanba (c 1290-1310 A.D.) as mentioned above is *Kalu Raja*. It is also a common practice that a tribe when settled in a new settlement after migrating from their homeland often gives the new settlement the name of their former city. It is therefore most reasonable to assume that the inhabitants of Mara village of Manipur were people of Maraw or Marawa or Mara of Von Den Brouke. Now we find that Pattikera is the capital city of Mara and the people inhabiting Mara were called *Kala* by the Arakanese and Burmese chronicles. The name *Kala Raja* of the Manipuri source means 'Raja of *Kala* tribe' and the earlier name of the Vishnupriya as discussed above is *Kala-cha* or *Kala-chaiya* where *-cha* and *-chaiya* are suffixes of Tibeto-Burman and mixed Tibeto-Burman and Pali origins respectively. The name of the last known king of Pattikera is *Hari-Kala-Deva Ranavankamalla* (1204-1220 A. D.) where the

words Hari and Deva appear to be honourific names, and *Kala* seems to be the name of the tribe to which king Ranavankamalla belonged. Hence we can assertively say that the earliest name of this tribe is Kala. It may be mentioned here that people of the old generation of Ningthoukhong who were of Vishnupriya origin used to say in their own intonations, "*Eikhoi-di Kala-rajaji dharanine*" meaning, "We are the descendants of Kala Raja", to show their pride of high birth.

King Ranavankamalla is found to be a devout Buddhist as mentioned in the copper plate inscription found in neighbourhood of Comilla which recorded the issue of grants of land to a Buddhist monastery built in the city of Pattikera. The mother of Kyanzittha the beloved monarch of Burma is called Panchakalyani who seems to be a princess of Pattikera as suggested from the account that her grand daughter Sweintthu had a love affair with a prince of Pattikera indicating a contact of this principality with Pagan. However some scholars believe Panchakalyani to be a princess of some petty states of Arakan.

The above investigations clearly show that the earlier home of the Vishnupriyas before entering into Maupur was the Pattikera principality. The living Vishnupriyas of today is ethnically an admixture of Australoids, Dravidoids and Tibeto-Burmans, possibly with some Austric elements, speaking a dialect basically an Indo-Aryan formation superimposed with Tibeto-Burman. They possibly moved to Eastern India in about the middle of the 11th century A.D. before their dialect was fully characterised from the outskirts of Magahi zone and got mixed with the earlier inhabitants. They do not pose to be a single homogeneous tribe.

As the rulers of Pattikera were Buddhists, there is every reason to say their subjects were also Buddhist. Thus the religion of the Vishnupriya was successively Brahmanism, Buddhism, Vishnu cult and finally Vaisnavism.

Nothing is definitely known about the ancestral home of this tribe, but it seems they were followers of Karna (c 1041-1070A.D.) the *Kala-churi* king who bestowed his daughter Virasri to



**Jatavarman.** It is believed that Jatavarman accompanied Karna in the latter's expedition of Bengal. Jatavarman later occupied Eastern Bengal by superseding the Chandra dynasty. It seems since then the Vishnupriyas settled in some areas east of Noakhali near Comilla. The ancestral home of the Kala-churi rulers is said to be the south west of Bihar, and the early kingdom of Jatavarman is supposed to be Kalinga. It is not clearly known how he came to Eastern Bengal. In conclusion it is fairly reasonable to assume that the ancestral home of the Vishnupriyas was some areas of the Chhotanagpur plateau. The early dialect of the Vishnupriyas seems to be an admixture of Kanarese and the dialects of some dark skinned supposed aborigines of Chhotanagpur before they adopted the Magahi dialect.

## THE MOIRANG

The Moirangs came by the southern route and settled on the hills lying to the west of the lake now known as the Loktak lake before they settled on the valley. The Moirang chieftain while inhabiting on the hill was Thangjing Koirel Lai. The hill where the Moirangs once inhabited became known as the Thangjing hills after the name of their chief Thangjing Koirel Lai. The literary account Moirang Ningthourol Lambuba mentions that Thangjing Koirel Lai on horse back once visited the place where the aristocratic Bangals ruled<sup>1</sup>. More details are discussed in the section on Bangals. The period of Bangal settlement is estimated to be about 1225 A.D. and that principality flourished upto about 1260 A.D. till it was destroyed by the Keges led by their king Onu Seng Raja a Himalayan prince of the Moriya clan. It is therefore seen that Thangjing Koirel Lai must have visited the Bangal principality sometime in A.D. 1250s. When the principality was destroyed its inhabitants who were admixtures of Bangals, proto-Bangals, Mayangs and Pasis fled to western hill ranges. After a lull of some years probably after the defeat of the Keges in the hands of the Poireis, the Moirangs along with some of the fugitives came down to the valley at about 1270 A.D. Moirang Ningthourol Lambuba mentions, '*Khoyum nasak hongna, Keke-Thangching chingchao yinna, Moirang Ngankha mayai khaina khunda pung Keke Haomupa-na mama Irai Iermacha, menang tanpa turengkai angouba, palem leitarakpa, thiklen khomhuk nateripa manpi khutahum kantaripapu, cheirei nahongsana lamkoipung*'<sup>2</sup>. The literal meaning of the passage is, 'O god (Thangjing Koirel Lai) you came down from the hill along the Keke-Thangjing great hill to the centre of Moirang

1. Moirang Ningthourol Lambuba, edited by O. Bhogeswar Singh, page-1.

2. *ibid.*, page-5.

Ngangkha, where Keke Haomu the son of Irai Leima\* ( Leima means princess ) welcomed you by putting a small white goat which was just born and had not sucked milk and the navel cord had not dried, with a cloth on his back'. This indicates that the Keke tribes had already settled before the Moirangs since Haomu was a Keke tribe. Within a short time the Kekes and Moirangs got amalgamated and the principality of the Keges became known as Kege-Moirang principality.

Linguistically the Moirangs belonged to a group of Tibeto-Burmans by itself. The dialect of the Moirangs clearly indicates it. The Moirangs were somewhat different from those Tibeto-Burmans who entered the valley by the north-easterly route. It appears the Moirangs are closely akin to Moran a Tibeto-Burman tribe inhabiting Upper Assam. Most of the Morans entered India by the north-eastern Assam route and settled in Upper Assam. It may be mentioned here according to the Moran traditions that they had three brothers namely Moilang, Moran and Moiran who lived in the upper reaches of the Ningthi (Chindwin) river at Mong Kong ( Mungkhong or Mogaung ) Of the three brothers the eldest Moilang remained in their ancestral home in the Hukong Valley while the two younger brothers namely Moran and Moiran passed the Patkai range and settled on the bank of the Tipuk river. The descendants of Moran became known as Moran tribe.<sup>4</sup> Relying

3. *ibid*, page 5.

4. Rev. S. Andle : The Cacharis, page-88.

If we are to rely on Moran traditions, then the Moirangs too could have been of Bodo origin but their dialect seems to have substantially changed when they began to settle on Imphal valley. Tribes of Bodo origin inhabiting the North-Eastern India are Koch, Mech, Lalung, Garo, Dimacha, Chutaya, Moran, Kachari, Tripuri etc. Names of persons with the suffix '-cha' are found amongst the Moirang, Mayang and some other Tibeto-Burmese tribes that entered Manipur. Amongst the Moran names like Badau-cha the suffix is found to have been adopted. Even if Moirangs were of Bodo origin, they seem to have been mixed thoroughly with Lai and other Tibeto-Burmans. Their ruling chief however belonged to the Lai tribes.

on these traditions, it is believed that Moirang also left their ancestral home and moved towards the south along the course of the Chindwin river upto the north of the Chin hills and then they moved northwards along the mediæval highways and finally reached the Imphal valley. In most Tibeto Burman dialects 'l' and 'n' are interchangeable, so Moilang and Moirang are the same word.

The Moirang word for water is *loklou*, for axe *haibi*, for dry land *kongki*, for shoulder *nao*, for thigh *seng*, for sharpness *khaba*, for prawn fish *kekong* etc. It is said that the name of the village Thang-ga is of Moirang origin which originally 'Thangkha' meaning 'sharp knife'. It then gradually changed to Thang-ga. Ningthourol Lambuba also refers to an account of naming the place. It also seems that Thangga means a cultivator in the Moirang dialect. Similarly the name Loktak is also of Moirang origin.

When the principality of Kege-Moirang flourished, the kings of Moirang were given the title Purik Lai. The term Lai is found to have been frequently adopted by the Moirang chiefs and others e.g. Lai Chingkhu, Koirel Lai, Lai Kacheng, Lai Tongkhu, Lai Tonghal etc. Besides, it is also found like Lai Yingthou or Lai Ningthou Khoriphaba. The connotation of the term Lai as found in the above instances does not necessarily mean 'god' as it is taken today. In current Manipuri language Lai means 'god' and sometimes 'female genital organ'. If the second meaning is applied to Lai Tongkhu or Lai Tonghal who were queens of the Poirei kings the results are not only vulgar but also disastrous. There were three words found current during the mediæval period which had the meaning of god. They were *Khoiyam*, *Khoimom* and *Ching-U*. All these three words are now obsolete. There is every possibility of the word *Lai* was used to mean god by the Chakkhas before the arrival of the Lai tribes or mixed with them in the regions of Kham and Lai, and long before their arrival in Imphal valley. With the arrival of Lai tribes or mixing with them the word *Lai* gradually discarded possibly out of confusion and the other vocabulary

namely *khoiyam* became the sole word for god<sup>5</sup>. So when they arrived in Imphal valley their sole word for god was *khoiyam*. The emergence of the word *lai* for god again was perhaps from the association of the Lai ancestors who were taken as gods. It is most probable that the word *lai* became to be known for god from the concept of the divine theory of kings when all the Moirang kings were associated with the term Lai and when people forgot that Lai was the name of a tribe. It is therefore seen that the Moirang chiefs belonged to the Lai tribes.

Who were the Laos ? The Lai are said to be the descendants of the early imperial dynasty of Howang-Ti and continued to be the highest aristocracy in ancient China enjoying special and exclusive rights and privileges for more than sixteen hundred years before the birth of Ch'in state in Kan-su and more than three thousand years before the first appearance of the "Chinese" with imperial dignity in 249 B C<sup>6</sup>. The Ch'in state of Kan-su was one of the five confederating states. The event of history had brought the Tai into a long drawn conflict with Chinese, 'yet from the physical resemblances and linguistic affinities these two people appear to be cognate races'.<sup>7</sup> Another one of the five confederating states namely Ch'u, towards the end of the fourth century B C, became a threat on north China then under the hegemony of the Ch'in state. Ch'u had a number of states which included the state of

5. Prof. Sayce a noted philologist in his *Principle of Comparative Philology*, Chapter VIII, states, " Every word has a history and that history is really the history of the mind. Words which were once pregnant with meaning may either put on new signification in sequence of social changes, or long use and acquitance may deprive them of their sense, so the sole meaning they possess is their mere sounds, or again, their original force may be forgotten, and they may survive as proper names or in connection with obsolete ceremonies, or lastly they may be confused of ideas. Words have a life, because the society which produces them has a life, and just as the old society became dead and misleading, so also do the words which shadow them forth".

6. Dr. Gogoi: *Tai and the Tai kingdoms*, page-32.

7. *ibid.*, page-33.

Lo after annexation. This state of Lo was created by Chong Kang the fourth emperor of the Hia dynasty. The Lo people were the descendants from the Tai-Tai ancestors. The state of Lo was ruled by Tai princes when it was annexed. In 689 B.C. the Lo state had a clash with Ch'u state itself. The Tai *Marquis of Lo* was forced to surrender. The title 'Marquis of Lo' was conferred by the Hia Emperor Seo Hao on the ruler of Lo at about 2150 B.C. The Tai Marquis of Lo was expelled, and a great number of Tai people who had their homes in Hupeh and Honan migrated to the south.

After a long drawn conflict among the five confederating states as mentioned above two states namely Ch'in and Ch'u emerged as successful rivals. The state of Ch'u was invaded by Shih-Wang-Ti, in 224 B.C., the Emperor of Ch'in and defeated them. Shih-Wang-Ti vanquished the prince of Ch'u. Thus step by step the Tai state of Honan came to an end.<sup>8</sup>

Not only the state of Lo came to an end but in 214 B.C., Shih-Wang-Ti issued orders also to seize and destroy all classical books specially those of Confucious. It is said that the Emperor ordered to bury 460 men of letters alive for remonstrating with him in his mad act.<sup>9</sup> The Tai who had been a cultured people, had been reduced to almost an illiterate race. "In a few decades following the tragic event these descendants of the once highest class of nobility degenerated into being hill tribes, or rather many of them got merged with the hill tribes in the inaccessible mountainous regions. Those who took shelter in the highlands of Sze-chuan, Yun-nan and Kwei-chow call themselves Tai or Chai to this day".<sup>10</sup>

It is said that "there were also a number of hill tribes in the southern provinces of Hunan, Kwang-si and Kwang-tung including the Lais who were the descendants of early feudal rulers or Marquises

8. *ibid.*, page-35.

9. *ibid.*, page-37.

10. *ibid.*, page-37.

created by Emperor Seo Hao in the 3rd millenium B.C. and who had come and settled in those areas long before the rise of the Chinese empire. They were later discovered by the Chinese in the period of Han, whose dominion extended far to the south. These hill tribes, who were mostly Tai, still contemptuously refer to the Chinese by the nickname *Ping-Ti-Kan*, meaning Plateau traitor. These Tai used to migrate in small groups to the southern countries as peaceful settlers of the plains region, but they would move in large masses in the event of war or large scale repulsion by the Chinese within the empire. The routes of these immigrants usually followed, particularly in descending from the hills, were the river valleys which open out in the lower courses into wide tracts of fertile plains. Thus these people entered Upper Burma through the valley of the Shweli, Namting and Taping".<sup>11</sup>

Of the generated Tais, it is said that, "twelve such tribes are mentioned, nine Lais and three Miaos. The Lais are found also among the southern Chin tribes of the Chin hills between Assam and Burma. The Miaos so called by the Shans, are really Meng or Hmeng. They are called Miaotzu by the Chinese. They are supposed to be of Mon race".<sup>12</sup>

So it is seen that the Lais were a tribe who descended from the ancient hereditary feudal ruler or Marquis of Lo.

One point to be noted is that the Lai tribes cannot, at any rate, be present in the territory of the ancient kingdom of Manipur before the 6th century A.D. as the Lai who were followers of confucianism is said to have developed the cult of ancestor worship as gods and goddesses from about the 6th century A.D. and offering sacrifices from about the 1st century A.D. besides their remnants of Confucianism. They probably dispersed in northern Burma from the east after acquiring this culture where they got mixed with the Himalayan tribes particularly the Khu, and from where they migrated to Imphal valley at a later period. Because of the cult of ancestor worship of the Lai tribes, the worships of

11. *ibid.*, page-38.

12. *ibid.*, page-37, foot note.

Saivism of this land became mingled up with the ancestor worship, more particularly Devi with female Lai ancestors. More details may be seen in the section on religion.

In Cheitharol Kumbaba it is mentioned that during the period of Loiyumba (c. 1310-36 A.D.), the administrative machinery was manned jointly by Lai and man, but gradually man became more and more prominent and finally all Lais disappeared. Quoting the text written in modern Meiteilon which states, "*Mahak thakta Lai-ga mi-ga lallup kanabadagi mina lakcharaduna Lai-gi makhel mangkhare. midana silhouye*". The literal meaning of the passage is 'In his reign when the administrative machinery (specially of war) was manned in turn by Lai and man, the man became more and more prominent and all Lais disappeared. It was substituted by man only'. It may be noted that the word *lallup* mentioned above is originally an institution of army organisation but later changed its application. Since it is impossible and baseless to man the administration either jointly or in turn with god and man where the modern meaning of Lai is god, the editors of the above referred text interpret in their foot note as, 'It is an indication that the culture of the west excels or supersedes that of the east'. However the note does elaborate what were the cultures of the east and west referred to. It is most probable that the scholars who recasted Cheitharol Kumbaba during the period 1825-35 A.D. with forged dates had no idea of the Lai tribes, put the name Lai with modern meaning in an equivocal way and Poireis were named as ordinary 'man'. Thus Lai and man referred to in the above text are the Lai tribe and Poirei respectively.

It also throws light further that the Lai tribes were active in the first half of the 14th century A. D. on the western side of Imphal valley. The Lai were found near Patsoi in the middle of the 13th century A.D. and they subdued the Khumans and Chengleis, and since then they pushed towards the north and north-east and became the subjects of the Poirei kings. The capital of Loiyumba was possibly on the north of present Heingang village. The Lais had social intercourse with the Poireis and they



took part in administration of Poirei. However they were gradually segregated and finally ousted. They then moved towards the south. This is perhaps due to the differences of culture and language of the Lai and Poirei. Loiyumba introduced or changed the secret rituals of *Ougri* to singing with merry-making in religious functions a distinct culture of the Poireis. Lai were worshippers of their ancestors as gods where as the Poireis did not.

In Moirang one king named Sanarakkha the fourth predecessor of Chingkhū Telheiba according to Sagei Salairol published by the Manipur State Kala Akademi, is found. Relying on this account Sanarakkha is estimated to be a contemporary of the Poirei king Loitongba (c. 1336-1336 A.D.). So the period of Sanarakkha is the early part of the 14th century A.D. The date is estimated from the account that Yoiren Tompokpi the only daughter of the royal house of Moirang born by the younger brother of Chingkhū Telheiba, got married to Thangbi Lanthaba (c. 1381-1391 A. D.) the Poirei king with a great episode. The spelling Sanarakkha is written as Sana-rakhwa in Sagei Salairol and Sanarakhwa in Moirang Ningthourol Lambuba. The spelling in most of the manuscripts are difficult to depend on, even Moriya is also found to have been written as Mariya in some manuscripts. The original spelling of this prince is believed to be Sana-rakkha. This name is definitely not a Tai origin. It is a mixed word of Aryan and some Mongoloids. *Sana* is an Aryan word meaning gold and *rakkha* is not known. Thus the name Sanarakkha is either an adopted name of the Kege-Moirang chief who was of Lai origin or Sanarakkha himself was a Moriya chief. The genealogy of the Moirang rulers as found in the above stated account shows sets of lines of Kouba tribe, Lai tribe, and some others but not mentioned the Moriya tribes. All these appear to have mixed in a chaotic order possibly to align at par with Pakhangba whose forged date is 33 A.D. by chroniclers of later period though true Moirang chronology of Lai chiefs should have started from about 1270 A.D. contemporary to the Poirei king Keirencha, with Thangjing Koirel Lai as its founder. If Sanarakkha is a name of the Moriyas it is possible to

investigate for such similarity with the names found in the Himalayan tribes to which Moriya clan belonged. Emperor Asoka belonged to the Moriya tribe or clan and he had three principal queens namely Asandhi-mitta, Padma-vati and Tissa-rakkha<sup>13</sup> (Karu-vaki). We find Sana-rakkha and Tissa-rakkha are in close similar form and pattern. Hence Sana-rakkha is a name of Moriya origin, and he himself perhaps belonged to a descendant of the Moriya rulers.

It is frequently seen that the ruler of a tribe and the tribe to which the ruler belonged are different races. In case of Moirang the ruling chief or rather the ruling group belonged to Lai, a Tai origin whereas the bulk of the Moirangs belong to a Tibeto-Burman of mixed stock of Lai, Khu, Bodo and Thado. As stated earlier Lai-Tongkhu, Lai-Tonghal etc. according to the Manipuri accounts belonged to Haokap, Chingsang, Khunpham, Ngangcheng etc. who in turn belonged to the so called old Kuki. Again the original Moirangs were a tribe to which the Morans belonged. Morans are said to be a Bodo origin. The suffix '-cha' is a Bodo origin adopted by other Tibeto-Burmans. A Moran chief named Badaucha in Upper Assam is found to have the name with the suffix '-cha'. Tribes of Bodo origin which are found in Upper Assam are Koch, Kachari, Lalung, Timacha, Garo, Rabha, Mech, Tipra, Chutiya, and Moran. Thus the Moirangs were of Bodo origin but got mixed with the Tai and other Tibeto-Burmans, altering substantially their dialect and culture. The Moirang dialect and culture so far recorded in Manipuri accounts are of Kege-Moirang when they got amalgamated into one unit. Similarly Kegees were Yun-nanese people of Chinese origin but their rulers were Moriyas. Thus Kege-Moirang culture is a mixed product of pre-Buddhist and Confucian cultures.

As for the origin of the appellation Moirang another hypothesis may also be proposed which yields better results. Moirang area including the Khuga valley was called Moiram by the Marems, meaning 'land of the sun' before the appellation Moirang came

13. Romila Thapar : *Asoka and decline of the Mauryas*, page-30.

into existence. More details may be seen in the section on the Origin of the name Meitei. The Nangois who settled at Ngangkha (modern Ngangkha-rawai) had social contact with the Marems who inhabited on the south-western hills before the coming of the tribe which would be later called Moirang tribe. When the new immigrants arrived and settled in Moiram the Nangois used to call them *Moi-rang* by adding their suffix *-rang* as in *hei-rang*, *lei-rang*, *pi-rang* etc to the first part or syllable *Moi-* of Moiram. Moirang Ningthourol Lambuba clearly mentions that the tribe which would become Moirang as *Ma-hui*, quoting the text, while addressing Thangching Koirel Lai, which states, "*Iyu Ma-hui ningthou, Ma-hui Hui thokpa*", meaning "My lord the king of *Ma-hui*, who is related to *Hui* of *Ma-hui*". It is therefore seen that the tribe which was led by Thangjung Koirel Lai to the southern part of Imphal valley was *Ma-hui* besides his own *Lai* tribes. It is also quite likely that this group of *Lai* had some *Khu* elements too. They were probably *Lai-Khu* the tribe to which the father of *Laikhuembi* belonged. When the new appellation *Moirang* came into existence the *Moirangs* were not a homogeneous tribe but a mixture of *Ma*, *Hui*, *Lai* and *Khu*.

Besides the *Chakpas* there were *Lai* who were of *Tai* origin, who settled in the valley to the north-east of the *Chakpa* settlement in the second half of the 13th century A.D. It seems these *Tai* settled after the retreat of the *Mayang* and *Bangal* from the *Lamangdong* principality and expanded their settlement towards the north-east in the valley upto the *Nawang Yi* which they gave the name *Nambul*. Since then the lower course of the *Nawang Yi* became known as the *Nambul* river. Thus we find place names where they settled, bore their names like the shrines of *Khoripha(ba)* near *Nambol*, *Konthoujam Lai-rembi* at *Konthoujam* village and *Maiyokpha* on the right bank of the *Nambul* river in *Imphal* and so on. The place names *Nam-bol*, *Oi-nam* and the river name *Nam-bul* are of *Tai* origins where *Nam* means water, probably a *Senbi* word. We find a lane called *Khamnam Leirak* and a small market called *Kham-nam Bazar* on the north-western part of

greater Imphal which are of Tai formation where Kham-Nam means 'gold-water' or it could also mean the 'water of Khampa' which in that case a mixed formation of Tai and Tibetan Khampa tribe.

As for Khoripha(ba) the legend says that he was the son of Sararen the sky-god and also said to be the same person with Thanjing Koirel Lai the chief of Moirang tribe who also belonged to a Lai, which seems to be an extrapolation. The legend further says that when Khoripha(ba) was a very small child he began to cry and no one could stop him crying and when at last a bunch of *Leishang*, a herbal plant with buds, was given, the child stopped crying. Since then he was given the name Leishang Khek-wai-ba. The words *Khek* and *wai* are probably Tai words and *ba* a Tibeto-Burman suffix. The legend suggests that the Lai were active upto the west of the Nambul river from the Loi-jing hills when the Poireis were active on the northern part of the valley. These Lai had an account of their ruling chiefs which probably mingled up with the chiefs of the Kege-Moirang principality when they got amalgamated with the Kege-Moirang principality. This is probably the reason why we get very confusing genealogy of the Kege-Moirang rulers.

The legends of Konthoujam Lai-rembi reveals a mixed Brahmanic and Confucious cultures. The legend says that Konthoujam Lai-rembi was married to Sararen the sky-god on the condition that no death was to be seen in her tribe by the grace of Sararen. The sky-god agreed her demand and took her to heaven. As she had not come to her parental home for a number of years, her people one day burnt a dog in the form of cremating a dead man and a column of smoke rose into the sky. On seeing the column of smoke she felt that someone in her tribe was dead. She approached Sararen that she would like to go down to the earth to see about the strange happening. Sararen replied that the column of smoke was nothing but a smoke of burning dog. However she insisted on and at last Sararen agreed on the condition that she should not eat beef, pork and drink wine. When she came to

earth her people said that they had intentionally burnt a dog so that she should come and meet them. Later they persuaded her to eat meat and drink wine and assured her that they would make seven layers of *phijang* (cloth screen) so that Sararen could not see her drinking wine. While she was drinking wine under the cover of seven layers of *phijang* Sararen saw her drinking and spat which fell on her and the door of the heaven was closed. Since then she remained as *Lai-rembi* at a spot which became later known as the *Konthoujam Lai-rembi Umang*.

It seems these Lai grew to political power and they probably subdued Khuman and Chenglei who inhabited by that time towards the north of their principality from Patsoi and its north-west upto foothills of the Koubru hills along the Nawang Yi. It is this pressure of the Lai that the Khumans moved towards the Mayang-Imphal area where they amalgamated with the Nongyai and other tribes like Khaioi. The Lai on the other hand absorbed tribes like Chinfu, Tafu etc. who were probably Tai Tribes.

## THE KABUI

The earliest reference of the Kabuis in Manipuri accounts is found during the reign of Irengba (c 1296-1310 A.D.). It is stated that when king Irengba died his widow queen Tamheibi wanted to carve a statue of the late king, instructed the royal sculptor Kabui Haochongba Haochong Nangmucha for the task. This indicates that the Kabuis must have arrived on this land earlier than the period c 1296-1310 A.D. or at least by that period. There is no indication that the Kabuis were on the western hills close to Imphal valley upto about 1270 A.D. since the contact of Kabuis by the Keges and Moirangs is not found in any source, particularly when the latter was on the hills now known as the Thangjing hills. Most probably the Kabuis entered the western hills of Manipur in the second half of the 13th century A.D. from southern side possibly by a more south-westerly route through which the Cambodian tribes like Mon, Khmer, Funan and Siam-mi arrived on this land by about the 10th or 11th century A.D. The Kabuis should not be expected to have arrived much earlier than the arrival of their cognate tribe Kabow in Kabow valley. The Kabuis pushed these Cambodian tribes towards north-west and took possession of the earlier settlements of these tribes. Some of the Kabuis who are by now called Kacha-Nagas in particular are products of mixing of the Kabuis with the Cambodian tribes particularly the Funans. But the name Ka-cha of the Kacha-Naga is a Bodo origin where Ka is the tribe Ka-bui and the suffix -cha is a Bodo word. These Cambodian tribes under the pressure of Kabuis from the south and Poireis from Imphal valley finally moved out of the territory of present political Manipur settled in the North Cachar hills at about the 15th century A.D. More details may be seen in the section on Funan, Maring, Mon-Khmer. The Kabuis in turn were subjected under the pressure of New Kukis who also came by the southerly route, and began

to concentrate on the western and north-western parts of Manipur and its adjoining areas of North Cachar and where they had contact with the Bodos when the latter moved from the north-east to those areas in the beginning of the 16th century A.D. They had also contact with Tibeto-Burman tribes of Bodos origin like Mangang, Mayang etc earlier in western Manipur.

The Kabuis are supposed to be a cognate tribe of Kabow, Kachin, Karen etc. whose ancestral home was the ancient Teru state of Southern China. The Kabui culture *Kajeng-Karas* is also found among the Kachins and Karens. They had been shifted from their ancestral home to some parts of northern and eastern Burma by Ko-lo-feng the Nan Chao Emperor in the latter half of 8th century A.D. It is likely that the Kabuis sojourned in eastern Burma before entering to India. There is no historical record on the movements of the Kabuis, but it may be presumed that the Kabuis moved towards the west to Manipur from their sojourn. They probably moved under the increasing Tai power in Thailand in the 12th century A.D. The earlier contacts suggest that the Kabuis may have elements of Tai, and other Cambodian tribes.

We do not have any record on the dialect of the Kabuis of the 13th century A.D. but present language indicates the image of the Bodo dialect. This is perhaps the result of their contact with the Bodos when they settled in their present habitat. The Kabui dialect belongs to Tibeto-Burmans.

The Kabuis are now categorised as Nagas but their cognate tribes in Burma and elsewhere continue to preserve the identity of their tribes except the Kabows who became Merteis and Burmese. The Kabuis now have four clans namely Kammei, Goumei, Gangmei and Longmei. The clans are exogamous and have several sub-clans except Longmis. There have been some suggestions of changing the name Kabui to Ruongmei.

Ngamei (Angami) seems to be a clan or a cognate tribe of the Kabuis. The Ngameis are claimed by the Karens as their kinsmen according to Smeaton. The Ngameis too have a tradition that they were a section of people belonging to Karen-noma who moved towards the west.

## THE MAO AND MARAM

Practically no record is available with us of the Mao and Maram. It is not known how they came to their present habitat in the northern hills of Manipur. It is certain that they are not the aboriginal people of that area. There is also no indication that the Mao and Maram tribes were in their present habitat in the 11th century A.D. It is most likely that they entered present Manipur from the Somra tract and gradually moved to their present habitat in the so-called the Mao-Maram area of Manipur. They may be regarded no doubt as one of the earliest inhabitants of that area.

At the most we can guess, firstly, that the Mao and Maram were of Tai and Man origins respectively. A branch of Tai-Khe who settled in the Swelli valley in Upper Burma from about the 6th century A.D. were called Mao or Tai-Mao. These Tai-Mao tribes must have sojourned here and there in Upper Burma for some centuries before they entered Manipur. It is also likely that most of the Naga tribes inhabiting Nagaland except some tribes were group of such people who first settled in the northern hills of Manipur arriving more or less by the same route through which the Mao and Maram arrived. Of these tribes the Mao and Maram appear to be the last arrival. From the northern hills of Manipur they gradually moved towards present Nagaland due to pressure of Cambodian tribes probably in the fourteenth century A.D.

Secondly, the dialects of the Mao and Maram belonged to some Tibeto-Burmans. Hence the dialect does not support the above hypothesis. Therefore we can assume that the Maos were originally the Mahous where Mao is a phonetic variant of Mahou as discussed in the section the Tangkhul. Again the Mahous were originally an admixture of Bodo and Hou. The dialect of Mao seems to



have certain image of the Bodo. We are not in a position to trace the original dialect of the Hou as they are not found having independent existence. The Mao as they are today probably had some other elements of Mons and Asiatics. Hence this hypothesis seems to be more probable.

## THE PANGAL

The appellation Bangal was originally given to the people of Bengal. The earliest reference of this tribe is found in the account Ningthourol Lambuba during the reign of Irengba<sup>1</sup> (c. 1296-1310 A.D.). It is stated in that account that Nongyai Thingkonhanba, the father-in-law of Irengba and Khuman chief, went on an assault on the southern Loijing ranges inhabited by the Pangals. Quoting the text which states, “.. Kouba umiram umei lngkai ching da khousaba Pangal Mar khulenleigi Kala Raja lamjingba...”. It will be seen in subsequent sections the Pangal mentioned here is Bangal i.e. the people of Bengal. When the Hindus of Bengal became more acquainted in later periods the word Pangal remained applied to the Muhammadans. Thus the word Pangal became a vocabulary meaning Muslims or followers of Islam religion.

Prince Sanongba the younger brother of king Khagemba (1597-1652 A.D.) had a disagreement with the king over the damage caused to his boat by one of the nobles of king Khagemba who was also a brother of the king. Sanongba then moved to the west somewhere south-west of Sylhet where he raised a force of a little above one thousand which included over one hundred Indo-Afghan Mussalman soldiers and revolted against his brother. The revolt was however crushed by Khagemba. The account further says that Khagemba was nearly defeated but for the wisdom of his general Larikyengba Dhananjoy he won the battle. He could suppress the revolt without much bloodshed in the year 1606 A. D. All the Muhammadan soldiers became captives. However Khagemba allowed them to settle on this land as peaceful settlers. Further they were allowed to marry Meitei wives.

Since these Muhammadans came from Bengal they were also called Pangal irrespective of their religious allegiance. There are

1. Ningthourol Lambuba, edited by O. Bhogswar Singh, pages-73, 74 & 98.

some accounts of Manipur which exclusively deal with the Muhammadan immigrants like *Nongshamei's account*, *Khagemba Lanpha*, *Pangal Khunthok* etc. In these accounts, details of each prominent individual as regards name, place of earlier habitat, social status etc. are recorded. It is stated in the Nongshamei's account, "*Heirangkhongcha Monsang cheithaba Saka 1528 ta Tarap sanaleipakki Muhammadani nachingbana huyen lansok naye. Lanhing 15 ga tenggon 97 mak khomlouye. Samu 30 sung, nongmei 1000 ka lanhing 1000 ka khutsu khulai suna minaisung khomlakye*".

In the above text '*Tarap sanaleipakki Muhammadani*' meaning 'the Muhammadans of Tarap state' indicates that the Muhammadan soldiers were from Tarap state which, at that time, was ruled by one *Badshah*. The word *Badshah* is found to have been written in these accounts as *Pasa* that creates some confusion with the erstwhile 'city of Pasa (Basa)' that existed for a short period in the beginning of the 13th century A.D. In Muslim accounts we find *Badshah* of Tarap, *Badshah* of Gour etc. Some scholars take *Pasa (Badshah)* as a country which is not tenable. It may be pointed out that the Burmese used to call Yun-nan as *Tarop*. The *Tarap* state mentioned in Manipuri account is located on the east of the Surma river and Maymansing entering around Habiganj, north of Agartala, south-west of Sylhet and Gour. A place *Baniyachung* is found to have been located on the northern part of *Tarop*.<sup>2</sup> The above text further indicates that the captives included 15 prominent ranks and 97 soldiers belonging to the Muhammadan community and the rest were assorted tribes. The Manipuri account clearly indicates the entire force were not Muhammadans.

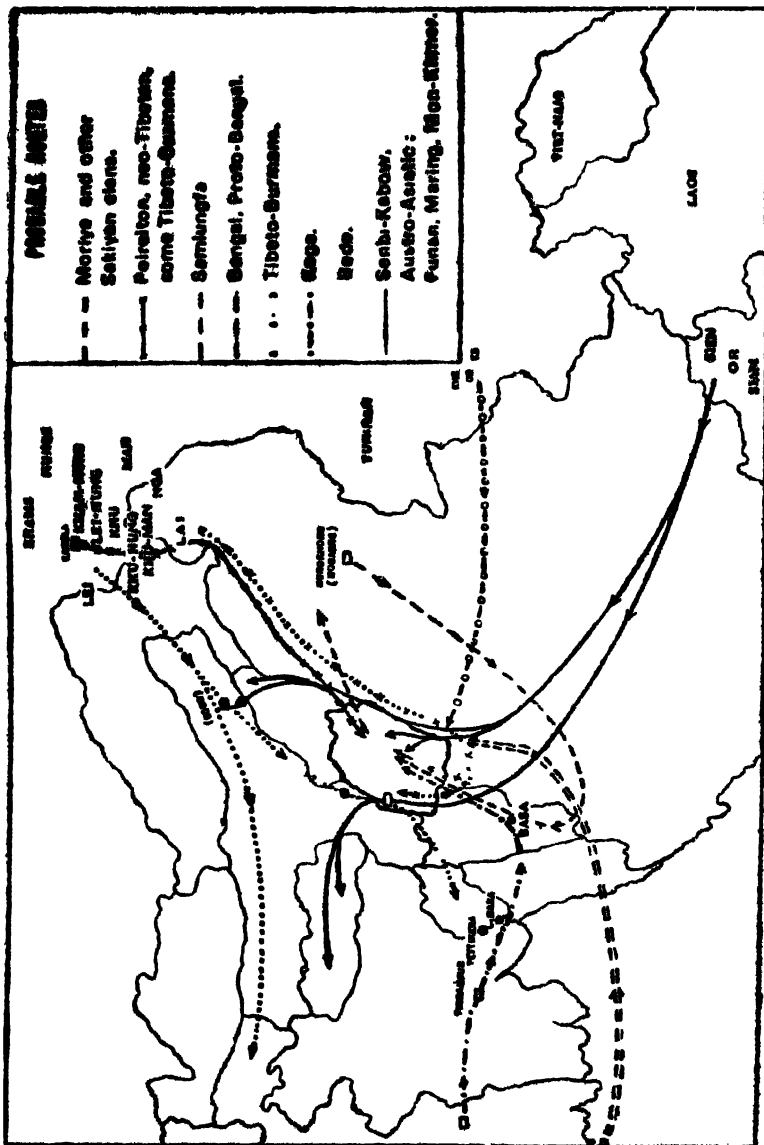
In *Khagemba Lanpha* names of individual Muslims with their earlier habitats are also given. One *Tona Mullik* from *Murshidabad* among those 15 prominent ranks was appointed the first *Kazi* of this land of the Muslim community. Most of these accounts keep silent about their language. However subsequent accounts do not

2. *Rajmala*, the Tripura chronicle, Vol. III, attached map. The location of *Tarap* state is shown as discussed in the above text.

suggest that they were speakers of Bengali language. Most of the Muhammadans continued to preserve their distinct identity. They gradually became speakers of Meiteilon. However there is no impossibility of some of them amalgamated with the Meiteis. There are secret stories in which Meitei princes had love affairs with Muslim girls, and married them. We have no record of it since the day of Shantadas Gosai. These Muslims are now called Meitei-Pangal. They constitute about 10% of the total Meitei population.

## THE INDO-ARYAN BRAHMIN

The Indo-Aryan Brahmins began to move to Manipur from the Indian mainland for settlement as peaceful settlers. It is very likely that several Brahmins arrived in the early part of the 15th century A.D. Those group of Brahmins possibly became common people while those who arrived in the latter part of that century continued to live as Brahmins. We have recorded account of Brahmin immigrants since the year 1467 A.D. The account Bamon Khunthoklon describes each individual Brahmin as regards name, place of their earlier habitat etc. All Brahmin immigrants became Meiteis. They were later known as *Meitei-Bamon*. The word *Bamon* is a Manipuri style of the name of Brahman. Now Meitei-Bamon constitutes about 5% of the total Meitei population. Details are discussed in the section on Indo-Aryan Brahmins and their Sagei allotment.





## THONGAREN

In the Manipuri account, Poireiton Khunthok, we find a king named Thongaren who ruled at Kangla of Khamnung Sawa, and as stated in earlier sections, this Kangla is located at 29°14'N and 97°E on the border of Tibet and a little north-west of Putao. The name Thongaren has three parts, namely Tho, Nga and ren. The words Tho and Nga are respectively the names of tribes of Tai and Himalayan Mongoloid origins of which the latter is found in the Mahabharata as Anga, where the Aryans could not pronounce the Mongoloid sound *Nga* but pronounced as *Angu* as stated in earlier sections. This tribe is found in the Manipuri and Burmese accounts as *Nga-nu*, where the suffix '-nu' is also a feminine suffix in some Mongoloid dialects. Modern Meiteilon or Manipuri language adopts this suffix as a feminine suffix, however, we find in some accounts it has been used as a masculine suffix also. In ancient Indian accounts the suffix '-nu' is found to have been used in both the senses like Shanta-nu, Bha-nu, Dhe-nu, Re-nu etc. The last part of the name Thongaren i.e. *ren* means chief or king. Thus Thongaren means 'King of Tho-Nga' indicating a reign name.

The suffix *-ren* in the Shan means 'house' i.e. family.<sup>1</sup> Tho-nga-ren may also be pronounced in the Shan way like Sao Nga Ren, Hso Nga Ren etc. In that case Thongaren means 'House of the family of Tho-Nga' indicating, Thongaren belonged to the house of Tho-Nga. As discussed in the section on Haokap, Chingsang, Khunpham and Ngangcheng, the subjects of Binnaka Raja were an admixture of Sakya and people of Shan origin, who were called the 'descendants of Binnaka Raja' by their neighbours specially those subjects who moved to the east and founded the 'nineteen Shan states of Burma'. It is the rulers of this group of people who used the prefix 'Tho-' in their names very frequently. It seems, this group

1. Dr. Gogoi : Tai and the Tai kingdoms, page-259.



of people called 'descendants of Binnaka Raja' were mostly people of Tai origin with their rulers of Sakiyan origins. On the other hand the subjects who continued to stay at Male after the death of Binnaka Raja were mostly people of Sakiyan origin due to obvious reason, to which king Thongaren belonged, which will be seen in subsequent parts. It appears at a later period, the tribe name Tho had changed to a vocabulary indicating something 'great' like Lai which originally was the name of a Tai tribe but later changed to a vocabulary meaning 'god'. The word Tho is found to have been adopted by the Mao Shans in their names at a later period.

In Mongoloid dialects the same word is found having different meanings in the different dialects, for example, the words *nga*, *ngu*, *nge*, *ngo* etc are found current among some Mongoloid tribes, of which the Burmese used the word *nga* as a suffix or prefix of an inferior where as the Meiteis used the word *ngu* to address the king like *Mei-Ding-Ngu* and the word *ngo* to the nobles like *I-ngo* while addressing the judges with similar English form of 'My lord', *Ibung-ngo* ( *I-baung-ngo* ) meaning 'my-junior-sir' usually to the younger and so on. The Burmese *nge* indicates junior like *Rajah-nge* meaning 'prince younger'. In modern as well as Old Manipuri *nga* is not used in any sense of the above but used to mean 'fish' in Modern Meiteilon. So *nga* of *Tho-Nga-Ren* does not indicate a vocabulary but synonymous name of a tribe.

The Maurya clan to which Gautama Buddha belonged is called *Moranga* ( *Mora-Nga* ) according to *Gotama Purana*, a Buddhist literature, and further it is also said that the place where this clan inhabited was full of peacocks. In the dialect of this tribe peacock is called *Mora*. Some scholars say that *Mora* is a Pali form of the word *Mayura* meaning peacock, where Pali is a mixed dialect of Aryan and Mongoloid. The name *Moranga* has two parts namely *Mora* and *Nga* indicating *Mora-Nga* was a *Nga* tribe who lived in the area where there was plenty of peacocks. It is therefore seen that the original pronunciation of the name

of the tribe to which Gautama Buddha belonged is Mora-Nga (मोराङ्ग) and its Sanskritised form is Moranga (मोराङ्ग). The word Moranga is further deviated to Moriya which some scholars say, is a Pali form of Mayura.

As stated above, Thongaren means 'King of Tho-Nga' who either ruled the amalgamated Tho and Nga tribes or he himself was a Tho-Nga tribe. King Thongaren is described in different literary accounts including Poireiton Khunthok as '*Chakkha ariba*'<sup>2</sup> meaning 'Ancient Chakkha'. This shows that Thongaren belonged to an ancient *Chakkha* tribe. In most of the Mongoloid dialects *sa* and *cha* are interchangeable e.g. So-lan as Che-lan, Tsin as Chin and such similarities are also found in Pali. Thus the word *Chakkha* may be pronounced as *Sakkha*. It is therefore seen that king Thongaren belonged to the *Sakkha* tribe. The name of the neo-Tibetan or Himalan tribe *Sakya* is a phonetic variant of the name *Chakkha* or *Sakkha*, a Sanskritised form of the word *Chakkha*. Tissa-rakkha was one of the queens of Asoka, son of Bindusara, and it is found to have been written as *Tisya-raksita*<sup>3</sup> in the Sanskritised style. Here Tissa is rendered into *Tisya*. There can be no doubt that *Chakkha* could have been written as *Sakya* in the Sanskritised style. Encyclopaedia Britannica<sup>4</sup> writes Śaśkyā for *Sakya*. It therefore would be no wrong to say that the original name of the Himalayan tribe is *Chakkha* as found in the accounts of Manipur, and *Sakya* is the Sanskritised style of it. In the accounts of Manipur two spellings are found for the name of this tribe, one is *Cha-kha* and the other is *Chak-kha*. Most of the Himalayan tribes found from non-Sanskritised sources do not mention *Sakya*. Manipuri sources mention *Chakkha*, *Yu-Chakkha*, *Yakkha*. Chinese sources mention names like *Yu-yao*, *Yueh-chueh*, *Pu-shi*, *Yung ch'ang* and West Asiatic sources mention names like *Yu-chi*, *Yueh-chi*. King Kaniska is said to have belonged to *Yueh-chi* tribe. More details may be seen in the section on clan formation.

2. Poireiton Khunthok, published by the Manipuri Sahitya Parishad, page-9.
3. Romila Thapar : *Aseka and decline of the Mauryas*, page-52.
4. Encyclopaedia Britannica, Vol. 18, page-374.

It is said that the Sanskrit dramas beginning from the 2nd century A.D. onwards, passages of Magadhi dialects spoken in certain parts of Magadha have shown changes from the earlier text compared with the later text. In earlier dialects there was no *r* only *l*, and *ʃ* and no other sibilant. Sounds in the earlier text *cha*, *ja*, *kk*, *chch* etc. were changed to *ya*, *yja*, *sk*, *sch* etc. respectively<sup>5</sup>. So *Chakkha* and *Yakkha* of the Manipuri source are found to be the same word where *cha* change *ya*. It is also supported by accounts of Manipur in which Yabiroka the mother of Nongta (Pakhangba) is described to have belonged to *Chakkha* as well as *Yakkha*. Ningthourol Lambuba states, "*Nayol Meitei-leima Leinung Yabiroka Chakkha, nurol pirol yambi*", meaning 'Grandmother Meitei Queen Yabiroka Chakkha, the polyandrous', and Khagemba Yumbi states, "*Leinung yabi Yakkha chanu, Chakkha nurol pirol yambi*". meaning 'Leinung lady Yakkha girl the polyandrous Chakkha'. In other accounts like Leithak Leikharol, Yabi Yakkha chanu laihui also Yabiroka is given to have belonged to *Yakkha*. More details may be seen in the section on Pakhangba. But *Chakkha* and *Yakkha* in a later period emerged as separate clans. It is therefore seen that *Chakkha* changes to *Śa-skya* as found in Encyclopaedia Britannica.

King Thongaren probably belonged to a descendant of Abhi Raja the Sakiyan prince who founded the Sakiyan dynasty in Burma as mentioned in the Burmese Chronicle or of Dhaja Raja who was also known as Mayur Dhaja and who renovated the shattered Sakiyan kingdom ruled by the descendants of Abhi Raja in the 3rd century A.D. The continuity of the geographical location of the kingdom of Thongaren to that of Binnaka Raja's last assylum near the Mali stream also supports it. Thongaren was a contemporary person of Ko-lo-feng and his successor I-mou-shun of the Nan Chao Empire, and lived during the latter part of the 8th century A.D. and beginning of the 9th century A.D. As for the date it may be seen in the section on Poiraiton.

5. Ningthourol Lambuba, edited by O. Bhageswar Singh, page-179 and History of Bengal, edited by Dr. R. C. Mazumdar, page-377.

In Burmese accounts names with the prefixes *Thada* and *Tho* in their dynastic lines are found, of which two important characters particularly in the accounted period of the Burmese history, namely Thadominbya<sup>6</sup> (1365-68 A.D.) and Thohanba<sup>7</sup> (1523-48 A.D.) may be mentioned. Thohanba is a Manipuri style of the name and the Burmese people would pronounce it as Thonhanbwa, and the Mao Shans would pronounce it as Hso Han Hpa. Most of the early rulers of central Burma were of Sakiyan origin with the exception of the Pys who were also possibly some other Himalayan tribes. The Burmese people were very particular about the blood line of their royalty.

As regards Thadominbya, some scholars believe him to be of Shan descent from the account that he descended from the house of Thihathu of Pinya. Thihathu was the youngest of the so-called 'three Shan brothers' who asserted themselves as the chiefs of three principalities. Some scholars also call him *Shan-Bama* ruler indicating a mixed stock of Shan and Bamans. The three Shan brothers are said to be sons of a Shan chief, who were sent to the court of Narathihapate at Taguang for education by the Shan chief at a time when the Pagan dynasty was on the decline in the year 1260 A.D. Narathihapate was the governor while his father king Uzana was the king at Pagan. When Uzana died in 1254 A.D., he was succeeded by Narathihapate, though born by a concubine, by the mercy of Yazathinkayan the wise chief minister by superseding Thingathu. Narathihapate provoked the Mongols who ultimately brought about the destruction of Pagan. When Pagan was reduced to skeleton the three Shan brothers asserted themselves as the chiefs of three states.<sup>8</sup>

Sukapha the Shan prince after conquering some parts of Assam sent his two sons namely Sao Sanpyenpha and Sao Ngokkyopha

6. W.S. Desai : A pageant of Burmese History, page-37.

7. *ibid.*, page-47.

8. Dr. Gogoi : Tai and Tai kingdoms, page-169.

together with three generals namely Taosoyen, Taosohankai and Taophaprao to attack Tagaung. They invaded Tagaung and Narathihapate, the ruler of Tagaung, fled to Sagaing and finally to Prome where his son Thihathu forced him to die by eating a poisoned food and consequently he died in the year 1287 A.D. Narathihapate was succeeded by his son Kyawswa in the year 1289 A.D. and became a vassal king under the Mongols. In the meantime the three Shan brothers became more prominent. When Kyawswa died his son Sawhit was allowed to occupy the throne by the three Shan brothers and ruled upto 1355 A.D. Sawhit was succeeded by his son Uzana, who according to Col. Phayre, was adopted by Thihathu<sup>9</sup> the youngest of the three Shan brothers whose principality was at Pinya. When Thihathu died he was succeeded by Uzana in the year 1325 A.D. and Sawyun the real son of Thihathu had already moved to Sagaing in 1315 A.D. following a family quarrel. The succession of Uzana is in confusion. The confusion is explained by Dr. Gogoi, "the truth seems to be that Uzana succeeded Sawhit in Pagan, but after a short period, left Pagan and succeeded Thihathu at Pinya the capital of Myinshing-Pinya kingdom".<sup>10</sup> On the other hand Sawyun had already established a principality at Sagaing and since then there had been protracted quarrel between Sagaing and Pinya. Uzana was succeeded by his half brother Nga-shi-shin. When Ngashishin died he was succeeded by his son Kyaw Sange Narathu the brother of Kyaw Sange succeeded him when the latter died in the year 1359 A.D.. In 1364 Narathu invited Mao Shans to punish Sagaing which the Mao Shans responded and destroyed Sagaing, and consequently Pinya too was destroyed. Col. Phayre says, "The Mau Shan from Mogaung carried war into the Pinya dominions and carried off the king".<sup>11</sup>

It seems from the above context that the chief of Pin-ya were of Pagan royal descents from Uzana (successor of Thihathu)

9. *ibid.*, page-176.

10. *ibid.*, page-176.

11. *ibid.*, page-177.

onwards. The principality of Pinya was established by Thihathu a Shan but subsequently passed on to the blood lines of Pagan rulers. In 1365 A.D. Thadominbya a chieftain of Pinya established a new capital at Ava (Awa). Thus it shows that Thadominbya was of a Pagan blood line possibly mixed matrilineally with the Shans.

In a likewise manner Thohanba the king of Ava who is known in the Burmese history for his anti-clergy feeling and destruction of Buddhist literature, ruled from 1527 A. D. to 1547 A.D. "These Ava kings were of the same character as the Shan *Sawbwas* or princes of the Shan hills, but there were two great differences. In the first place they rightly claimed Pagan royal blood, and secondly, being successors to the Pagan tradition together with its religious associations, they maintained some of the old forms of civilization and of the Pagan royalty" —W.S. Desai.<sup>12</sup>

Thus the relation of Thado-Jambudwipa (Dhaja Raja) to Thohanbwa (1527-47 A.D.) is perhaps the same as that of Thado-Jambudwipa to Thongayen (c 780-810 A.D.) It is also seen that the Sakya tribes who moved towards northern Burma got mainly mixed with neo-Tibetans of Tai origin and other Tibeto-Burmans, while those who moved towards lower Burma got mixed with the Pyus, Burmans, Saks, Kanyas (Arakanese) and Mons. The Sakiyan tribes, particularly the Moriya clan who continued to stay in Moriya (south-east of present Manipur and parts of Upper Chindwin valley now known as Kabow valley) got mixed with the Yunnanese like Keke (Kege), Chin, tribes of Mon origin, tribes of Tai origin like Lai, and other Tibeto-Burmans

It may also be noted that names of persons pertaining to the Ava royal family are found to have been adopted among the Meiteis also. One person of the Nongbal tribe who had been declared the chief of the Nongbal in the year 1551 A.D. during the period of Chalamba is found to have the name Omba (also written as Om), from

onwards the Nongbal clan became known as Angom. More details may be seen in the section on Clan formation. Again one king of Ava is found to have the name Omba Raja (Ombara-cha)<sup>13</sup> who was subdued by Khagamba (1597-1652 A.D.). This name appears to be very common among the royal family of Meiteis like Ombi Sana, in its feminine form. The Burmese equivalent of Omba Raja seems to be Ombwa-yaza and is believed to have originated from the Vedic word Om.

The suffix *Tho-* appears to have changed to a titular name in later period. This word is equivalent to the Tai word 'Sao' and sometimes with 'Hso'. Several Tai rulers of later period are found to have adopted Sao as suffix in their names. It seems Ko-lo-feng was also posthumously given this suffix. Sao Wong-Ti is identified as Ko-lo-feng which is a Chinese corrupt word for Hkun Luwang Fung. The name Sao Wong-Ti may also be pronounced as Thowangsibwa in the Burmese style. Sao Wong-Ti had a daughter named Pappawadi a mispronunciation of Parvati. She was given in marriage to Hkun Lu in 763 A.D., from them descended the dynasty of Hkun Long and Hkun Lai according to Hsen-Wi chronicles. The foundation of the kingdom of Mungrimungram by HkunLong and HkunLai according to the Mao Shan chronicles is in the year 568 A.D. Hence there is a discrepancy of about 200 years on these two dates. The adoption of the word Sao appears to be not popular among the *Sawbwas* till about the 10th century A.D. In later period this word is found to be frequently adopted by them and we find Hkun Tun assumed the name Sao Hom Mong when he became ruler in about 1057 A.D. who had a daughter named Samonla (Sao Mon La). The father of Sao Hom Mong was Sao Tao-Nga-Run. Sao Ngan Hpa whom the Burmese used to call Thonganbwa, was the Shan *Sawbwa* of Mong Mao from 1432 to 1443 A.D. Tai Long (1346-96 A.D.) probably assumed the name Hao Khyen Hpa when he became a ruler. He was called

13. Ningthourol Lambuba, edited by O. Bhogeswar Singh, page-297.

by the Burmese Thokyebwa. Narathihapate the grandson of Kyaswa (1234-50 A.D.) the Pagan king was called by the Shans Hso Hsthapadi. Most of these latter Tagaung rulers were called Shan-Bumans indicating a mixed stock of Shan and Sakiyan ruling lines. It is also quite likely from about the beginning of the Christian era there were mixings of these two tribes. The Burmese people seems to be not in favour of the mixing. The word Tho had become a mixed culture of the Sakyas and Tai ruling lines.

The activities of the Mao Shans were mainly concentrated in eastern Burma in the 8th century A.D. and the Tagaung country was not completely under their control. Different cities of the Tagaung country continued to be ruled by princes of Sakiyan origin. Thongaren lived at least 40 generations earlier than Thohanba and at least 30 generations earlier than Thadominbya. The inundations the Shans ( Mao Shans ) into the ruling lines of the Tagaung rulers was from of about the 13th century A.D. Thus if Shan elements are to be present at all in Thongaren it should have been through matrilineal lines with Tayoks a group of Shans from Yun-nan who entered Burma in the 3rd century A.D., and certainly should have been lower than that of Thohanba. The Ava rulers beginning from Thadominbya are considered by some scholars like Dr. Gogoi as the people of central Burma considered them by that period. However, Mingyi Swasawke who is said to have succeeded Thadominbya, 'thought it expedient to claim his descent from Pagan royal family' —Dr. Gogoi.<sup>14</sup>

The chief queen of Thongaren is named *Lai-khu-rembi*. It is stated in Poireiton Khunthok that she had a wide mouth, a small bosom and oblique eyes, a characteristic of a group of Mongoloids. The word or name *Lai-khu-rembi* may be split up into three parts *Lai*, *Khu*, and *Rembi*. The first two parts denote the names of tribes *Lai* and *Khu*, and the last part *Rembi* means chief, head or graceful in feminine form. In that case Laikhurembi could have

14. Dr. Gogoi: Tai and the Tai kingdoms, page-117.



belonged to a mixed tribe of Lai and Khu or could have been a titular name. Laikhurembi is said to be the daughter of Lai-ren Humchouba ( Hoom Chao Hpa in the Shan style). In some manuscripts the spelling is given as Humngouba. The Manipuri accounts do not further mention anything of Humchouba. As discussed earlier, *Lai-ren* means 'Chief of Lai'. Thus 'Lai-ren Humchouba' means 'Humchouba the chief of Lai'. The Lai were a group of degenerated Tai tribes as a result of repression on the educated and cultured Tai by the Chinese Emperor Shi-Wang-Shi in the 3rd century B.C.

The younger queen is named Leima Leinaotabi. The word *Leima* means princess or queen, *Lei-Naota* means 'Naota of Lci' and 'bi' is a feminine suffix. So far different scholars interpret *Leinaotabi* means 'flower that blooms later' from the fact that *Lei* is a word for flower and *Naota* means younger. If [the word *Lei* in *Leinaotabi* is the vocabulary for flower then the name appears to be a titular name rather than her original name. Again the Manipuri account *Poireiton Khunthok* mentions that *Leima Leinaotabi* belonged to a *Khunung* tribe. This comment seems to be that they were people of *Khunung* land not necessarily the tribe. The account gives the parentage of *Leima Leinaotabi*. It describes she was the daughter of *Thongaiba* the chief of *Nganba*, begotton in the womb of *Puroi Lemnu*. *Thongaiba* was a very prominent figure and known for his justice. The family of *Thongaiba* was known as the 'victor of the Mahous'. It is said that *Nungchong-cha Lee-la* possibly a chief of the *Mahous* was beheaded by *Thongaiba* or his predecessors. The text describes the parentage in a confusing way, quoting the text, "*Touykiti sanou Chingkhong Poireiton-O natei Leima Leinaotabi Khunung Nganba mapu ningthou chanu charei laka-pampapu khongkheinabi sukmu khampapu wangampa langya thampapu watemala chanu Chakkha Khunung Leihanbana pokpi Leihan-nu Laicham thongkhong sempa laifa temfa chingnung kharo Laihatpana yenpi Khunung louri sempa shingkhong taoba nuok sempa mathel teipa chanu Puroi Lem-nu linkoiki Khunung Thongaiba wayel chumpana pokpi mapam hebal laan-nikit Mahou Nungchong-cha Leela-haotamhibu ahong lala teina*

*sungba chanupu chennakhiyo*”,<sup>15</sup> which may be rendered as, “But, O, my younger brother Chingkhong Poireiton, accompany thy sister-in-law Leima Leinaotabi the daughter of the Ngamba chief of Khunung, a lady who dresseth her cloths as long as the heels with the lower half of its longitudinal edges stitched (in modern Manipuri *phanek khao-tuba*), a lady whose parental home exercised their judiciary or control over all the living beings as well as over the deaths ; Leima Laihan-nu] a lady begotten in the womb of Chakkha Khunung Laihan by Kharo Laihatpa who constructed bridges on the streams in the foothills where the Lai and their akin tribes inhabited, who constructed *louri* (earth enclosures for maintaining water level in paddy fields) in Khunung, who collected timbers, who constructed rock walls ; a lady begotten in the sacred womb of Puroi Lem-nu by Thongaiba, the chief of Anga known for his justice ; the bravery of her parental family is known for beheading Nungchong-cha Lee-la the ferocious Mahou” The stream mentioned in the text is probably the Lok-Lai river in northern Burma running close to the Indian border.

In Ningthourol Lambuba the parentage of Leinaotabi is given as follows : “...*Kharou Laihatpana yenbi Khamchikon Hasheibachanu mapuroi lemnusu linkoigi Thongaiba, wayen chumbana pokpi Leima Haihan-nu-ga loibi sidaba hembra , adababu leirigabra haina chingburoi tamburoikenna langollakpada Chingkhong Poireiton-na Mestei-leima Leinaotabibu waoikhiye*”. Here Leima Haihan-nu (a difference in spelling with the above text which gives as Laihan-nu) is described to be the other name of Leima Leinaotabi.

In some manuscripts of Poireiton Khunthok, Laihat and Laihan are written as Leihan where both Lai and Lei are Mongoloid tribes of which Lai is Tai tribe and Lei is Himalayan or neo-Tibetan tribe. In Lei area of Khunung both Lai and Lei inhabited. Yabiroka the mother of Nongta (Pakhangba) belonged

15. Poireiton Khunthok, published by the Manipuri Sahitya Parishad, page-9.

to this Lei tribe. She was born on this land in the latter half of the 10th century A.D. long after these tribes settled on this valley.

The pedigree given above is very confusing and at the same time the spellings of such old manuscripts are difficult to depend on, however it may be analysed as follows. Puroi Lem-nu and Leima Laihan-nu (Leihan-nu) could have been the same person and Puroi Lem-nu seems to have a titular name Leima Laihan-nu (Leihan-nu). Puroi Lem-nu may also be written as Puroilem-nu since the spellings of the above text are not dependable, which gives the meaning 'progenitor lady'. The word Leima is also not found in Puroilem-nu. In some other manuscripts of Poireiton Khunthok, Puroilem-nu is found to have been written as Puroilem-nu-su. Thus Leima Leinaotabi's mother and father were Leima Leihan-nu who was later called Puroilem-nu and Thongaiba respectively, the maternal grand father and maternal grand mother were most likely Kharo Leihat and Leihanpa. The text does not mention the paternal grand-father and grand-mother. This is one of the peculiarities of the Manipuri accounts

The Khunung area was inhabited by tribes like Khu-Nung, Khu-Man, Khaba, Lai etc so far available from Manipuri accounts. The Nganba and Khaba tribes were clans of the Nga tribe which were later called the Nga-nu. More details are discussed in the latter part of this article. Manipuri accounts further mention that Nganba belonged to the *Yu-Chakha* tribe

It is distinctly seen that king Thongaren had two wives, one was of Tai origin while the other one was of neo-Tibetan or Sakiyan origin. As discussed above Thongaiba may also be pronounced in the Burmese style as Thongaibwa. Early names like Thongaiba, Thonganba, Thongamba, Thohungba, Thohanba etc. suggest they belonged to more or less the same ethnic tribe. Such names are found to have been adopted by the Tai rulers in later period. Since Thongaiba lived in the 8th century A.D., it is more likely that he was a prince descended from the Sakiyan ruling line of Tagaung. If it is so, it is possible to investigate the name Leima

Leinaotabi in the Sakiyan way which may also be said a Burmese Pali. Most of the names of Sakiyan origin found in Indian history are influenced by the Aryan way of pronounciation. Details are discussed in the section on Meitellon or Manipuri language. But it may be mentioned here that the Mongoloid sound *er* is pronounced as *ε* by the Aryans frequently. Thus Leima is pronounced as Lima/Rima, and Leinaotabi as Linaota excluding the feminine suffix '-bi' Lei-Naota-bi may also be interpreted as 'Nouta of Lei' The analysis of the name strikingly agrees with the Sakiyan names found in Indian history. It is very likely that there are Kham elements in the matrilineal lines of the family of Thongaiba.

King Thongaren had one younger brother named Poireiton. In some manuscripts the other name of Poireiton is given as Poinaota. His full name is Chingkhong Poireiton Khonphang Atonba. It was prince Poireiton who migrated from Sawa Kangla to Imphal valley with a horde of settlers and founded a principality at about 810 A.D. on south of Kangla-tongbi which in course of time became known as *Poires-pak* meaning 'Poirei-land' after his name.

In the Burmese accounts as stated in earlier sections when Binnaka Raja died as fugitive near the Mahi stream in northern Burma, his followers were split up into three groups. One group moved towards the east and founded the nineteen Shan states of Burma. According to Dr. Gogo<sup>16</sup> they are said to be Tai subjects of Binnaka Raja. The second group moved towards the south in Kabow valley where the Sakiyan kings ruled. The rulers of this group belonged to the Moriya clan of the Himalayan Mongoloid Sakya as seen from the fact that the name Moriya was found to have been adopted by the chiefs of Kale and Samjok (Thangdaut)<sup>17</sup> even in early British period. It may be mentioned here that the chief of Keges who expanded the Moriya kingdom

16. Dr. Gogo: Tai and Tai kingdoms, page-110.

17. W. Yumjao Singh : An early History of Manipur, page-26. and see also Upper Burma Gazetteer, part I, Vol. I, page-291.

or shifted his capital towards southern part of Imphal valley at about 1100 A.D. is found to have the name Moriya Phamballacha, who is known in the Manipuri account for his reformation of calender. Details may be seen in the sections on Kege and on Moriya Phamballacha. While those who continued to stay near the Mali stream were the rest of the Sakiyan tribe and their admixtures, including the Tho and Do who were possibly tribes of Tai origin. All these accounts do not indicate Thongaren to be a Tai origin even though his subjects may have people of Tai or Tai origin.

The Sakya tribe was originally from Sakya<sup>18</sup> in southern Tibet and to the north of Sikkim, which is now known as Sakya Gumpa. The Sakya tribes were Mongoloids. The recent researches of David McDonald also strongly suggest it. It is said that the Mongol conqueror Kublai Khan (Ku-pu-lai) conquered Tibet in the middle of the 13th century A.D. He later invited the high priest of the great monastery at Sakya to his court in China. Kublai Khan was impressed and converted into Lamaism. He gave the sovereignty of Tibet to the Sakya Lama.<sup>19</sup> The Tibetans by that time were very conservative and believed that they were the oldest people or human beings on earth. It is very doubtful that an Indian or Indo-Aryan origin would become the Lama of a great monastery. So the Sakyas must have been a Tibetan or other Himalayan Mongoloid tribe. Thus the Sakyas were a Himalayan Mongoloid tribe like the Lichhavi who moved to the plains of the Indian sub-continent. The name Lichhavi is believed to be a conventional name of a Sakya or Moriya who adopted a particular culture, and seems to be a Sanskritised style of the word *Leichhavi* in which the Aryans pronounced the 'ei' sound as 'i' with some phonetic variations. Thus *Leichhavi* was changed to *Lichhavi*. There had been a culture among the Meiteis and some other hill

18. Dr. Gogoi: Tai and the Tai kingdoms, page-105.

19. *ibid.*, page-97 foot note; and also see History of Chinese Buddhism, by McDonald.

tribes in which hair was trimmed by cutting transversely over the forehead the frontal portion of hair. This type of hair dressing was known as *leichhavi*. It is most likely that a Himalayan tribe to which Mahavir Jain belonged practised that culture, and for that reason they were called Leichhavi which was further changed to Lichhavi in the Sanskritised style. It may be noted, unlike the earlier Leichhavi tribe, the Meiteis used the hair only by the girls, and for this reason the unmarried girls of marriageable age are called Leichhavi in Manipuri language and the virgins.

With the increasing pressure of the Mao Shans in eastern Burma several princes of Sakiyan origin moved further north of Tagaung and thus in the 8th century A.D. northern Burma became a congeries of petty principedoms ruled by Sakiyan princes. These Sakiyan princes are described to be Tibetan princes by J.T.O. Barnard. "Putao is a plain district in Khamti Long. This area was earlier under the rule of Tibetan princes later occupied by the Shans".<sup>20</sup> He further says that the occupation by the Shans was after the invasion of Ko-lo-feng in the latter part of 8th century A.D.

We may discuss a little more of the Himalayan tribes though discussed in earlier sections which constituted some basic components of the Meiteis. We have discussed that Chakkha is the original name of a Himalayan tribe and its Sanskritised form is Sakya. As for the Aryanised Sakyas we have ample accounts from the Indian sources specially of the latter half of the first millenium B.C., but for those who were not totally Aryanised it is only the Manipuri source which can throw light on us with special reference to the formation of the Meiteis. Even in Manipuri source we do not have a wide range to trace the relation of the Aryanised Sakyas known as Indo-Aryan and the non-Aryanised sections except some words of Chakkhan origin and place names given by them. In their words they frequently used the suffix

'-la', '-ta', '-ra' etc. We find from Manipuri source words like Lei-ma (lady or princess), Chit-ma (calf), Ichu-ma (my friend); place names like Lampak, Namkhan,<sup>21</sup> Khampat, Khaari, and names of persons like Nongta, Nouta, Sanarakkha, Yabiroka etc. These word formations have a striking similarity with those words of of the Sakyas even as late as the Asokan period. Names like Sasima, Vitasoka, Vigatasoka. Ashandimita, Nemita, Tissarakkha etc. are found among the Sakyan tribes. We also find place names like Lampak in Kabul near Jallalabad, Lamkan a new name of Lampak, Khambhat (Khampat) in Gujarat, Lakhpat in Rann of Kutch, Khaari in Vanga. The word *Khaari* is believed to mean some flat lands but it has changed to fields for growing rice like *khaari-loujuk*. The above given words were of pre-Buddhist formations and we also get some words and names of persons of post Asokan period. The mother of Thongaren is said to be a lady called Piyai-nu. The Sanskritised form of Piyai-nu could have been Priya Devi, Piya of Pali is equivalent to Priya of Sanskrit. The maternal grand-mother of Yabiroka is called Saya-nu and its Sanskrit equivalent could have been Saya Devi. Yabiroka is the mother of Nongta (Pakhangba).

Their way of life and religious worship reveal the pre-Buddhist culture of the Sakyas. More details may be seen in the section on Religion.

The Himalayan tribes so far found from the Manipuri sources may include the following tribes namely Nga, Khu, Lei, etc. These tribes inhabited the eastern Himalayas and southern Tibet, and they seem to have been ruled by the Chakkhan princes who were descendants of Abhi Raja who ruled in Tagaung in Upper Burma. Most of these tribes used the suffix '-nu' and '-pa' of which the latter is believed to be Tibetan origin, to denote people like Nga-nu, Khu-nu, Lei-nnu, Kham-nu, but in the case of Kham-nu the suffix is generally given to women of Kham tribe

21. Ningthourol Lambuba, edited by O. Bhogeswar Singh, page-179.

and instead of that Kham-pa (Khamba) is used. Of the above mentioned tribes, except Nga, other remaining tribes appear to have amalgamated with other tribes possibly from about the 6th century A.D. Thus we get Khamnung (Kham-Nung), Leinung (Lei-Nung) and Khunung (Khu-Nung) like Shelloy-Langmai, Kege-Moirang, Senbi-Kabow etc. indicating amalgamation of two tribes.

The Himalayan tribe Nga appears to have dispersed to the south eastern Gangetic plains of Bihar, Bengal and Orissa in pre-historic days. Tribes like Anga, Vanga, Kalinga, Moranga, Sunga etc. as found from the Indian sources belonged to the Himalayan tribe Nga origin. All the above sounds were of Aryan style, the original Mongoloid style were Nga for Anga, Pa-Nga for Vanga, Kali-Nga for Kalinga, Mora-Nga for Moranga and Su-Nga for Sunga. The Nga tribe particularly Pa-Nga was very barbarous upto the time of Mahavir Jain. As stated earlier when Mahavir Jain travelled through the pathless country of Ladhas which is considered to be some western parts of Bengal, people made the dog bite him with the command word 'ch-chchu'<sup>22</sup> in their dialect. It is also evident from the fact that this very word is found in Manipuri language using in the same sense which was the dialect of the Nga tribe or people of Nga origin in the Meitei setup. The habitation of the Nga people in the eastern limit was perhaps the tri-juncture of India, Burma and Tibet. They became mostly Burmese, Manipuris and Mishmis. They were subjects of king Thongaren.

People of Nga origin are found as Nga-nu in the Manipuri and Burmese accounts. Many names of ladies belonging to Nga are found in Manipuri accounts describing like Nganu-rol Taram-su, Nganu-rol Sangleima, Nganu-rol Likyai-nu etc. As stated earlier Thongaiba is said to have ruled the Nga tribe. The tribe to which Thongaiba belonged and the tribe ruled by Thongaiba became a constituent part of the Meiteis. They were grouped under the Naganba clan in the Meitei setup. Further the Nga-nu people are

22. History of Bengal, edited by Dr. R. C. Mazumdar, Vol. I, Chapter II, page-36,



described in the Manipuri accounts to have belonged to the *Yu-Chakkha* tribe like 'Leinung Yu-Chakkha ohanu Nganu-rol Taram-su'. Since Leima Leinaotabi is not found at all to have been described as Nganu-rol in any text, it is therefore difficult to say that she belonged to a Nga tribe. The Nganbas of the Meitei setup are the Angas found in the Indian sources

It is mentioned in the Burmese accounts that one Nga-nu usurped the throne of Ava in between Thadominbya (1365-68 A.D.) and Sawsawke (1368-1047 A.D.), but no detail is given about him. It is most likely that the descendants of Thongaiba were known at a later period as Nganu. The period of Thongaiba is the closing part of the 8th century A D

It is seen that the Nga people who dispersed in the areas of Bihar, Bengal and Orissa became Indo-Aryans while the rest continued to be Mongoloids.

The Himalayan tribe Khu probably began to mix with other Mongoloid tribes from about the 6th century A.D. They got mainly mixed with Lai, Nung, Man, Miaos and other tribes. In Manipuri accounts we find two such mixed tribes namely Khunung (Khu-Nung) and Khuman (Khu-Man) besides Laikhu (Lai-Khu). Nung and Lai were people of Tai origin; Man and Miaos were people of Mon origin. The people of Mon origin who came later to Manipur were called Marings.\*\* Some of the Khunungs and Khumans who entered Manipur in the early part of the 9th century A.D. became a constituent part of the Meiteis. They formed the so-called Khuman clan in the Meitei setup.

Since the Khus did not pose an independent identity, most of the people of Khu origin are found to have the word Khu in their names like Naori-khu, Thangchi-khu, Haonu-khu Tang-khu etc. while those who mixed with the Lai were called like Lai-ching-Khu, Lai-tong-Khu etc. Some of these group of people entered Manipur

in the 13th century A.D. They appear to have changed substantially in their speech from the earlier people of Khu origin. The major chunk of the Tangkhuls belonged to the people of Khu.

The Lei people of Khu also lost their independent identity at the time when they entered Manipur. The first batch immigrants of Lei origin arrived in Manipur by the closing part of the 8th century A.D. or beginning of the 9th century A.D. The Lei people got mixed with Nung, Hou and some other Tibeto-Burmans. Nung people as stated earlier were people of Tai origin and Hou too seems to be a Sino-Tibetan tribe. In Manipuri accounts we find Leinung and some of the Leihous who entered Manipur became a constituent part of the Meiteis and they are now in the Mangang clan. While those remaining Leihous who continued to stay on the hills of Manipur are by now in the Tangkhuls and Ao Nagas and possibly in the Mao Nagas. The chieftainship of such tribes appear to have continued in the hands of people of Lei origin.

The Manipuri accounts do not mention the migration of Kham tribes except its mixed tribe Khamnung, but it appears some of them came along with Poireiton and amalgamated later with the Khumans who occupied the eastern side of the Loktak lake after shifting their habitation from the south west of Kangla-tongbi plateau. We find only casual references of this tribe as Kham-pa (in modern sound Kham-ba) except in the famous historical novel *Khamba-Thoibi*. The real name of the hero Khamba in this novel is Amudon alias Sajouba.

It is not known how much of the Kham people are there in the Burmese, Manipuris and other tribes, but the bulk of them became Tibetans besides the ruling Sikkimese and Bhutiyas. Kham-pa now represents a Tibetan tribe. It is mainly from the dialect of Kham-pa who constituted a component part of the Meiteis, many similar soft sounding words or the same words with the Tibetan language are found in Manipuri. The Tibetan accounts also agree with that of the courage of Khamba in the above

mentioned novel. The Tibetan account says that the best men i.e. brave warriors were from the Khams. The novel describes Khamba to be a brave and virtuous man. It is stated that Puremba the father of Khamba was a brave man and caught seven tigers alive. Puremba is said to have come from the Khumans and took asylum in Moirang. The origin of the mother of Amudon (Khampa) is described with obscurity. She had been caught from the area of Ngangkha by Puremba and hence she was given the name Ngangkha Leima. When Lai Chin-Khu the Moirang king saw her he wanted to take her to wife, and he took her. Ngangkha Leima was given to Puremba again as present when she had conceived a child and when Puremba had already become a prominent noble-man of the king. Ngangkha Leima gave birth to a female child who was called Khamnu. At the most it can be presumed that Ngangkha-Leima belonged to a Ngangkha tribe. The origin of this tribe too is in obscurity. However they could have belonged to some of the tribes of Ngangoi origin who inhabited the south-western area.

The earliest habitat of the Kham people or the Khampas is found to have been mentioned on the western side of Kongba-ru (source of the Kongba river) on the west of Kangla-tongbi plateau. In Ningthourol Lambuba it is stated in connection with the felling of trees by Khuyoi Tompok that he cut down trees at *Kham-kol*. Quoting the text, which states, "*Nayu Meidingu Khuyoi Tompok-ti haorei nongchup-la pangbaramda malang mathong ching-da Kham-kol marak chingdagi madairem Konde maibana hoithem-ye*",<sup>24</sup> which literally means, "Konde the physician of the Meitei king Khuyoi Tompok felled trees at *Kham-kol* located on the west of their habitation, where the wind used to come from that direction". We find the word *Kham-kol* meaning 'hive of Kham people'. The habitation of Khuyoi Tompok was at the source of the Kongba river which will be seen in subsequent sections. Now we have a rough idea of the nature of people ruled by king Thongaren.

24. *Ibid.*, page-6.

## POIREITON

As for the investigation of Poireiton we have to depend on a single source of literary nature as no other material is available at our disposal. The single source is the book entitled Poireiton Khunthok. This book is an account of migration of Poireiton. The printed book available with us at present is believed to have been written in the 15th century A.D. that had been copied and and recopied in subsequent periods and finally emerged as a printed book. While doing so there had been omissions and commissions, words of recent origin are also found in the text. The printed book is from a manuscript of post Pamheiba period i.e. the second half of the 18th century A.D. Since this is the only source of ascertaining the racial origin and others of Poireiton it is desirable to examine it more critically.

The gist of the account of migration as found in the said book has been given in earlier section. However a little more detail of it is given as follows. A man described to have come in the form of a mole approached Thongaren the king of death to come to their 'land of human world' where there was no illness. They called the land of human world *Tai-pang-pan*. The text describes *Tai-pang-pan* is the place where the Tai-Pang inhabited, in an allegorical way. The word *pan* means to inhabit. King Thongaren conceded the request, but, as he was old enough he asked his younger brother Chingkhong Poireiton to go to *Tai-pang-pan*. In the meantime king Thongaren wanted to know what people were in *Tai-pang-pan*. The mole gave names of persons: (1) Kongkhangpha, (2) Laikhutsu, (3) Laikhutsang, (4) Moriya Phamballacha, (5) Leima Tanu and (6) king Kangba.

Poireiton was a widower with six children left by his deceased wife. Poireiton said, as he was a widower it would not be good for him to go to *Tai-pang-pan* without a wife. King Thongaren asked his first wife Laikhurembi to accompany with Poireiton as

his wife. She expressed her unwillingness as she had a wide mouth, oblique eyes and without proper swelling of bosoms, and the people of *Tai-pang-pan* would mock at her and at the same time she had been living with the king for a long time and according to their practice, trees had been planted for the recognition of her and the king as spouse. The king then asked his second wife Leima Leinaotabi to accompany her brother-in-law as his wife in the migration. She agreed the proposal. They made preparations for the journey. They collected varieties of paddy which included *chakhao* later known as *chakhao-poireiton*, besides agricultural implements, devices for spinning cotton, domesticated animals, earthen pots, *senbungs* a sounding device, husk of rice for carrying fire. Poireiton brought an iron rod which he used as walking stick. The horde included men and women of different trades. The party then started for the journey and they came across a huge rock that closed the passage which they believed to be the dividing line between the land of death and human world. They tried to remove the rock but found it difficult. At last by a horned bull they removed the rock. They all now passed off the rock block but they found some articles were left behind. Chakriba and his wife Tangribi were sent back to collect them. Chakriba returned with the articles but when his wife was about to cross the rock, it fell and closed the passage again as before. Thus the husband and the wife were separated. The book however narrates in somewhat different way with a pathetic scene. It may be presumed that the wife had fallen in some crevices and cried for help and finally crushed by the very weight of the falling rock. The party then sent an advance party in which Khumarong and Maibarong became victims of a tiger. The man eater was found sitting on their way and they could not expel the beast. At last Leima Leinaotabi released some hornets which she brought in a special container. The hornets attacked the tiger. The tiger ran away and thus their way was cleared off the beast.

The book describes naming of different places associated with the activities of Poireiton as he moved from place to place. While

they were moving they came across different tribes. The book mentions Burmese, Chakpas and some Tibeto-Burmans. They also met one man named Ngangoi Yoimongba who possibly belonged to subjects of king Thongaren. He was found clearing the course of a stream by rowing a boat. Poireiton had a conversation with the man. Ngangoi Yoimongba first addressed Poireiton *ichuma* meaning 'my friend'. When Poireiton disclosed his identity, Ngangoi Yoimongba complimented and said "You are not *ichuma*, you are *iyawa*",<sup>1</sup> meaning "You are not 'my friend', you are 'my lord-younger'". In one occasion the Burmese people presented him a pitcher of wine. They halted at several places. In another occasion Poireiton saw a column of smoke and enquired about the cause of the smoke. But to his surprise he was told that it was neither the smoke of burning house nor the burning of hay in the field, it was the smoke coming from the burning of the dead body of a Chakpa boy named Sangphuraipha who died of an accident. The tribe of Poireiton took it a horror and they thought there was a devil fire that devoured the corpse and soon they left the place.

In course of their long journey which possibly took them several months halting at different places, several of them died including the six children of Poireiton left by his deceased wife. Of the six children four were sons and two were daughters. The sons were (1) Chakkha Khonghanba, (2) Kangdol Leinouba, (3) Sagang Yaimaba, and (4) Leishang Khekwaiba. The daughters were (1) Huiyoi Konthingnu and (2) Haochong Langmeinu. Huiyoi Konthingnu was his loveliest daughter. When she died Poireiton was shocked and cried aloud. The book does not mention clearly who died first and who died last. It is believed that Huiyoi Konthingnu died last. As Poireiton lost all his children he was overwhelmed with grief and abused his sister-in-law Leima Leinaotabi for her forgetting to bring the herbal medicines prepared from

1. Poireiton Khunthok, published by the Manipuri Sahitya Parishad, page-88.]

the herbs that herbs grew on the Chakka range and Mori hills which could save the life of a dying man. When Huyoi Konthingnu died she was buried with a *senbung* as the last present from her loving father. *Senbung* is a metallic device for producing a heavy sound and used like a gong. Its shape is round and a convex portion is protruded at the centre. It is hung by means of a rope through its periphery and a wooden hammer is used for striking at the convex portion. It is generally made of bell-metal an alloy of copper and zinc. On their way they saw hundreds of dead bodies but the book narrates as hundreds of boys and girls going to the land of death.

After wandering for a number of days from their last halt they finally landed on the northern parts of Imphal valley. Poireiton exclaimed, his soles were wearing away and his iron stick was found heavier as he was weaker and took rest on a green patch of land there.

The above account may not be hundred percent correct as the said book may be regarded as purely a literary account and at the same time the facts were transferred orally from mouth to mouth for centuries before it was written down. From this delicate source we shall try to establish (1) the racial origin of Poireiton, (2) the location of their original homeland, (3) the period of their migration and (4) the route of their migration, etc.

The name of the land of the death where king Thongaren ruled as found in the text is Khamnung Sawa. In an allegorical way the mole compared the flowers of Khamnung with that of *Tai-pang-pan* and found the flowers of *Tai-pang* were more beautiful. It is stated that Poireiton's party also forgot to bring the fruit that would make them to forget the thought of life at Khamnung when eaten. When they settled on the northern part of Imphal valley their tribe grew prosperous and increased in number. But the life at Khamnung and the treacherous path through which they came were not forgotten. Tabaung Singminaba, a son born by the second wife Leima Leinaotaobi fell seriously ill and about

Ninthourol Lambuba mentions that Naokhamba married a woman who belonged to the Yaoreiba family, and enters her as *Yaoreiba Chanu*. It is not known whether that woman was a daughter of Yaoreiba or of his descendants. The text Chengleirol elaborates that *Yaoreiba Chanu* was the wife of Thangyi Khongjroba the chief of the Chengles. She was abducted and forcibly taken away by Naokhamba the Poursi prince from the hands of Thangyi Khongjromba when she had already conceived a child of five months' term<sup>2</sup>. When she became the wife of Naokhamba she gave birth to a male child. The child grew up as the child of Naokhamba and was given the name Naophang Ahanba. Yaoreiba Chanu also bore him another son and a daughter. They were given the names Naophangba and Yoikum Chengbi respectively. When Naokhamba died, Naophang Ahanba claimed that he was the eldest son he should succeed the throne but people knew that he was the son of Thangyi Khongjromba, there was a row over the succession of throne. At last the mother intervened and asked her two sons to see God's ordeal by dipping in water in which the right man could remain longer. They agreed and in that test Naophangba came out to be victorious and succeeded his father.

In all such texts neither the name of that Yaoreiba Chanu nor the name of her father is given. But Ningthourol Lambuba while describing the history or activities of Yaoreiba family, mentions that the family title Ashangbam began to exist when Sira Konthing-nu, the younger sister of Pakhangba was alive. It is stated that there was a quarrel over the loss of some chicken, goats etc. in the locality of the family of Yaoreiba. Later both the parties agreed to resolve their feud and they sacrificed a young cow. The sacrificed animal was cooked by Sira Konthing-nu the younger sister of Pakhangba, who was possibly a prominent lady, which the text comments, "The meat of the cow was so much cooked

2. Chengleirol, a manuscript.



that the meat disintegrated". When the feud was resolved they decided to shift their settlement to some other places. In doing so the whole inhabitants including the family to which Yaoreiba Chanu would be born moved through the places where the Ashangbam family settled. This text clearly indicates that Yaoreiba Chanu was not the daughter of Yaoreiba but a descendant. Again in Sagei Salairol, published by the State Kala Akademi, it is shown that Mayengbam Sagei began to exist from the descendant of Atang the fifth descendant of Yaoreiba. The family of Yaoreiba Chanu is also found to have been described as Mayengbam. Again Yaoreiba is found to be the sixth descendant of Luwang Punshiba. Luwang Punshiba is the fourth descendant of Poireiton. So by summing up we find that Yaoreiba Chanu belonged to a minimum of 16th degree descendant of Poireiton had she been the immediate descendant of Atang. Since Sira Konthing-nu is found to be contemporary of some of the descendants of Yaoreiba or at the most of Yaoreiba himself, her uterine brother Pakhangba can at the most be contemporary of Yaoreiba himself if not the descendants and cannot live centuries earlier than herself. Sira Konlung-nu is also found to be very active during the reign of Khuyoy Tompok the son of Pakhangba. It will be seen in subsequent sections that Pakhangba is found to be one of the great grand-sons of Luwang Punshiba.

As for Naokhamba there is no difficulty, all literary sources including Cheitharol Kumbaba agree that he was the sixth descendant of Pakhangba. Yaoreiba must have been a contemporary person of Pakhangba at the latest. The son or the daughter of Atang is the 7th descendant of Yaoreiba. Hence the party of the degree for matrimonial relation is quite reasonable. So it is clearly seen that Poireiton is senior to Pakhangba by 10 generations in the minimum. It may be mentioned here that some concocted manuscripts are found in which it is written that Pakhangba and Poireiton had a wrestling contest and Luwang Punshiba was the umpire. Pakhangba won the contest and took Laisna the younger

sister of Poireiton to wife. The story was probably manufactured by some illiterates. The time span between father and son is of about twenty years on the average in the early period as discussed in earlier sections. We also do not know the degree of authenticity and accuracy of the records and accounts under our consideration. So for possible errors we can give allowances either to positive or to negative on the deducted figures. If we want Poireiton to be still younger we take the negative, or if we want him to be still older we take the positive. Let us take the negative and make Poireiton as young as possible with respect to Pakhangba and reduce the generation gap by two, so as to make a difference of eight generations only. This is equal to about 160-170 years. In short Poireiton lived at least one and half centuries earlier than Pakhangba. Thus tentatively we assess the date of Poireiton as 810 A.D. taking the tentative date of Pakhangba as 980 A.D.

We proceed to investigate where was Khamnung the 'land of the death' as follows. We take four possible places for considerations, namely (1) a place from within the eastern territory of ancient Manipur, (2) some areas of the Chin hills, (3) some areas of eastern parts of Sylhet, and (4) some areas to the north of Hukong valley.

(1) The climatic conditions of all hills and foot-hills of Manipur by about 800 A.D. to this date is practically the same except Imphal valley. Most of these areas were healthy places. Imphal valley by 800 A.D. was a swampy mass of land full of weeds and other growths, and was not a good place for human habitation. However the northern part of the valley became a good place for human settlement specially the high lands of Kangla-tongbi and Upper Iril valley. But the south east of Upper Iril valley seems to be a malaria infested zone. It is most likely that the early inhabitants of that area shifted to some other places for fear of the disease which they could not understand but perhaps felt a zone of devils. By about 800 A.D. there seems to be no human civilization in these areas from where they could have been supposed to have moved in search of other places. In the south

eastern parts of ancient Manipur i.e. present Kabow valley proper there was human civilization from about 200 B.C. The city was ruled by Moriya princes. King Thongaren elder brother of Poireiton is not found to have ruled in the city of Moriya. It is therefore most likely that Khamnung was not within the eastern territory of ancient Manipur.

(2) The Chin hills and its surrounding areas were good places for human settlement by about the above stated period. There is no indication that human civilization was in that area at the above stated period however some settlements of primitive tribes are not ruled out. The Chins possibly began to inhabit the area in the closing part of the 11th century A D besides other tribes like Lai, Miaos, Meng, Hmeng etc who also moved to that place by more or less the same period with that of the Chins who were inhabitants of southern Yun-nan. Subsequent accounts do not indicate the existence of any principality or kingdom in these areas in the period under consideration. Nor any place name to have associated with the land of Khamnung is found in that area. It is therefore less likely the Chin hills and its surrounding areas was the land of Khamnung.

(3) It appears the area of Siri Hatta (Sylhet) by about 800 A D was possibly under the influence of the Vaimans of Kamarupa. The Vaimans were probably Aryanised Himalayan Mongoloids. It was a period before the coming of Kacharis from Upper Assam. The inhabitants of Sylhet by about that period were perhaps an admixture of Himalayan and Austo-Asiatic tribes. Sylhet by that period was called Harikela which the Chinese writer I-tsing described the eastern limit of eastern India. It appears the pre-Buddhist culture was prevalent in that area. The literary accounts of Manipur do not clearly mention the religious faith of the early Poneis, but their way of practice indicates a close similarity with the pre-Buddhist culture. In the dialect of the Poneis the word for worship or sacrifices is *i-rat* or *lat*. In archaic Vedic the same word is found as *i-rah*. As Vedic people

were an admixture of Himalayan Mongoloids and Aryans it is difficult to trace the origin of the word. It could have belonged to either of them. From cultural point of view Poireiton could have come from that region, but the dialect of the Poireis is free from Auto-Asiatic formations. If he was a man from that region there could have been at least an image of Austric formation and more over there is no indication of the presence of the land Khamnung in these areas. Thus Poireiton from Sylhet is ruled out.

(4) In the area north of Hukong valley which is now known as northern Burma and south-eastern Tibet, there was a tribe called Nung who were of Tai origin but got mixed with the Tibetan Mongoloids. Their dialect belonged to the so called Sino-Tibetan language. At about 800 A.D. there was no country called Burma, the central Burma was a Pyu kingdom, the northern Burma was a principedom of petty principalities ruled by the princes of Sakiyan origin, eastern Burma was of petty Shan states and lower Burma was ruled by Mons and Burmans. Some scholars describe these Sakiyan princes as Tibetan princes. It is said that, "Putao is a plain district in Khamti Long. This area was earlier under the rule of Tibetan princes but later occupied by the Shans. This change might have been one of the effects of Ko-lo-feng's victory over the Tibetans".<sup>3</sup> The Tibetan source describes the area as Khams region. Thus Nung people inhabiting the Khams region were called Kham-Nung (Khamnung). The Khams region is a big area in which some areas were occupied by Khu and Lei tribes, and the area was also synchronously called Khu and Lei. The Nung people who lived in these places were called Khu-Nung and Lei-Nung. It is apparent from the name that the Nung people came to these areas inhabited by Kham(pa), Khu(nu), Lei(nu). The Nung people were followed soon by people of Mon origin like Man, Miaos or Miotzsu who spoke a proto-Sino-Tibetan dialect before their language was fully characterised in the 6th century A.D. They were then followed by wave of Tibeto-Burmans and

3. Dr. Gogoi : Tai and the Tai kingdoms, page-159 foot note.

other tribes of which the following may be mentioned which constituted the Meiteis They were the Nongbal, Nongyai, Nongmai, Langmai, Kang, Kong, Kou etc. who were of Tibeto-Burmans, Heirong, Heirem, Khunjan, Lai etc who were of Tai and Tai origins, Mahou, Mahui who were of Bodo origins, and Chakkha, Yu-Chakka, etc, who were of Himalayan Mongoloids In short, this area was a vortex zone of cross human movements mainly from the east

The existence of Khams region is also mentioned in most of the accounts of Manipur including Ningthourol Lambuba In Ningthourol Lambuba it is stated that the Poirei people came from *Khamlei Munnigol*<sup>4</sup> (*Kham lei nu Nung kol*) meaning 'Kham-land the hive of Nung people' Thus we have discovered the land of Khamnung that has hitherto been taken to be a hypothetical place called the 'land of the death'.

As we have detected Khamlei or Khamleipak, our next step is to locate the place where Thongaren ruled King Thongaren is described as *Leinung koiba* (*Chakkha ariba* meaning 'ancient Chakkha, the protector of Leinung' It shows that his kingdom is the place called Lei The inhabitants of Lei who came to Imphal valley were mixed tribes like Lei Nung and Lei Hou besides Chakkhas and others In Poireiton Khunthok, it is described while Poireiton in course of his migration met the Sachung chieftain named Sachung Langmentemba Now Sachung (Tsa chung) is found to have located at about 97° 13'E and 28° 31'N and very close to Sachung a place called Kangla is found to have located at about 97°E and 29°14 N No place with the same spelling as that of Sawa is found to day but a place called Chuwa-su is found on the bank of the Zayul river a little north of Kangla

Now we may roughly trace a possible route through which Poireiton and his horde moved from Sawa Kangla to Imphal valley No doubt Poireiton gave names of many places but it became perhaps a fancy for the latter text writers to associate Poireiton

4 Ningthourol Lambuba, edited by O. Bhogeswar Singh, page 3

somehow or the other for naming of other places. Beginning from Sawa Kangla they moved to Sangang-chu (where *chu* means water in the Tibetan language); from Sangang-chu to Chuwa; from Chuwa to Sachung (Tsa-chung), from Sachung to Chayu (Rima); from Chayu to Tong; from Tong to Tenai, from Tenai to Minzong; from Minzong they probably crossed the hills forming watersheds and arrived at the source of the Mali river; after moving a little along the course of the Mali river they possibly crossed the Chukhan pass (probably Chakkhan pass) and arrived at the source of the Loklai river. The name of the river is believed to have derived from the name of Lai tribes inhabited in that area, where Lok means stream in the dialects of some Tibeto-Burmans of Bodo origin like the Mahui who were subjects of Lai chiefs. The word Lok is a living vocabulary of modern Manipuri language, the earlier word is *Yi* or *I* but this word becomes obsolete and is found only in the prefix form denoting water. They moved from the source of the Loklai river to the Ningthlu (Chindwin) river, along its course along some flattened tops parallel to the river, as far as a point to the east of Somra tract, from Somra tract they probably moved westward and entered the political boundary of present Manipur somewhere near present Poi village in the Ukhrul sub-division, from where they moved to the source of the river which they gave the name Leel-wai Yi (Leelwai river). However the name of the river has changed to Yi-Leel or I-ril today. Along the course of the I-ril river they arrived in the valley somewhere on the north of Sagolmang; and from there they moved to the plateau lying between a river and a hill range on the west. When they arrived and settled on southern part of the plateau they gave the name Kangla to that plateau and in course of time when other places were given the name Kangla, this Kangla was given another adjective *tongbi* meaning 'elevated'. Hence it was known as Kangla-tongbi. They also seem to have given the name Lee-wang Yi to the river flowing east of Kangla-tongbi which is now called the Imphal river. It is not known what name was given to the

Koubru hills. The name Koubru was given when the Kou(ba) tribes moved to that hill following a quarrel with Nongta (Pa-khangba) while they were at the source of the Kongba stream. According to Poireiton Khunthok they first halted at a place where there were abundant growths of ferns and weeds for settlement which Poireiton's physician named Thongnang Kaibayang objected to.

One difficulty is that, whether the immigrants migrated directly from Leinung to Imphal valley or they sojourned here and there for a considerable length of time before they finally settled in Imphal valley is not found. The Manipuri accounts give very confusing statements. Poireiton seems to have been roamed the eastern hills of Manipur according to these sources but never mentions the long route through which they came. Or else, the writer who had no knowledge of the location of Leinung projected all the happenings in that long route to be entirely to the area in which the writer had the knowledge of its geography. It is a general trend that people arriving Imphal valley in the north-east occupied the north and north-east part of the valley adjoining the hills, those arriving in the east occupied the eastern part adjoining the hills, those arriving in the south occupied the south and so on.

It is also found in Moirang Ningthourol Lambuba that Poireiton had another brother named Poinaota<sup>5</sup>. It is not known whether it is the other name of Poireiton. However, in Ningthourol Lambuba, Poinaota is described to be the other name of Poireiton<sup>6</sup>. In both the names the first part Poi is retained and both -reiton and -naota indicate young or the youngest. Thus Poi appears to be the name of a place or tribe or so. It may be pointed out that to analyse something from the name in modern context is erroneous, e.g. we get names like Khrushchev, Lenin, Pavlov, Valentina etc. among the Meiteis, they

5. Moirang Ningthourol Lambuba, edited by O. Bhogeswar Singh, page-

6. Ningthourol Lambuba, edited by O. Bhogeswar Singh, pages-318.

are not Russians. However we also get some names like Manglem, Khomei; woman called Chaoba, all such names definitely indicate something specific even to this date. If a man is called Manglem it is sure that some elders particularly some precious children of the parents were lost before his birth and by naming the newly born child Manglem meaning 'cremation-left' the parents believe that the child would live long. Khomei cannot be the first child of the mother, he must positively be the last child or so where Khomei means 'the last sucking child of the mother', woman called Chaoba indicates generally she had only elder sisters and no elder brother and parents longing for a male child believe if they give male name Chaoba to the female child the next issue would have been a male child and so on.

In the case of Poireiton and Poinaota, it seems they had some specific applications. The word Poi became a vocabulary. The modern word for *poi(ba)* is *koi(ba)*, and found in *lumpoi(ba)* (*lamboi(ba)*) meaning monk or ascetic who roams from place to place, *ingkhokoi(ba) leel* meaning 'a snake which controls the *ingkhokoi*'. In these cases the word *poi* is a vocabulary and hence *leining poi(ba)* or *leining koi(ba)* may be developed. As stated above king Thongaren is described as *leining koi(ba)* and sometimes but less frequently Poireiton is also described with the same adjective. It may also be noted that the early dialect of the Poireis, the Tibeto-Burman suffix '-ba' is practically free and it is used as masculine suffix only and its feminine counterpart is '-bi' e.g. Te-ba (Deva) and Te-bi (Devi). With the coming of more and more Tibeto-Burman immigrants this suffix became very common and with modern '-ba' Poireiton and Poinaota can be written as Poireiton-ba and Poinaota-ba respectively. It is possible to punctuate Leining Poireiton or Leining Poinaota as Lei-Nung-poi(ba)-Leiton(ba) or Lei-Nung-poi(ba)-Naota(ba). In these formations Leiton or Naota is described to be the youngest man who controls or looks after the Nung people of Lei. It, therefore, appears, Poi stands for Lei-Nung-poi(ba). It shows that the tribe of Poireiton were



not the earliest settlers of Lei, they moved to that land where the Nung people had settled in the home of Lei people. If the Nung people were the earliest inhabitants of the area they should have used some other words. It is therefore seen that the real part of the name Poireiton or Poinaota is Leiton or Naota. W. Yumjao Singh feels Poireiton is derived from the Sanskrit word *Paryyatana*.

Besides the contentions of the historian the Sanskritised formation of the word Poireiton may be rendered as follows. The Mongoloid sound of *oi* and *ei* are changed to *a* or *aya* and *i* respectively in Sanskrit and vice versa. Details are discussed in the section on Meiteilon or Manipuri language. Hence Poirei becomes Pari and with the addition of the *-iya* suffix it becomes Pariya. Therefore Poireiton becomes Pariyatan. The suffixes *-ton* and *-tan* are of the same formations and details are discussed in the section on Meiteilon or Manipuri language. Again in Gypsy *rei* and *rai* are the same words and are interchangeable. Taking into consideration of this word Poireiton gives a meaning 'Protector-lord-younger'. Thus there are three possible hypotheses on the meaning of Poireiton. They are (1) Traveller-younger, (2) Goat-possessor-younger and (3) Protector-lord-younger. Of these three meanings 'Protector-lord the younger' and 'Goat-possessor the younger' are more likely, however some succeeding names like Yaorei and Kairei found in Manipuri accounts strongly suggest the latter.

Noy Elias in his account says that the Chinese general Li-sang-pa (possibly *Leisangpa* in Manipuri style) from Yun-nan in an attempt to crush Mong Mao in the year 1496 A.D. which was ruled at that time by Sao Pem Hpa (Thopembwa in Burmese style) resorted to a means of creating panic to the Shans. "He constructed a number of rafts, placed a goat on each, and set them floating down the Shweli; the Shans on seeing the goats approaching from the sides of China, exclaimed, *Khe Poi Pe Ma*, 'the Chinese are sending goats down', a cry that quickly spread through the town as 'the Chinese are coming floating down', and

created a general panic. The citizens together with the army, fled in all directions and Sao Pem Hpa, who was ill by that time and unable to move, died as the enemy entered his city". Poi of Poireiton therefore seems to be Tai word meaning 'goat'. If it be so Poirei is a word formation like Yaorei and Kairei as found in Manipuri accounts where Yao and Kai are sheep and chicken or hen respectively, who are descendants of Poireiton. With the suffix '-ba' we find Yaoreiba and Kaireiba from whom descended Mayengbam and Ashangbam families or *Sageis* of the Mcitei setup. It is also possible to form words Yaoreiton and Kaireiton like Poireiton. The full name of Tabaung, the spelling may also be written as Taboung or Tabung, the son of Poireiton is Shingut Singtabaung Tabaung Shingminnaba also called Ningol Saranba. In a shortened form it is usually found to have been adopted by early Prome rulers. The legends of early Prome rulers as found in the Glass Palace chronicles are that the kingdom of Prome was established by Mahathambwa who ruled from 483 B.C. to 423 B.C. The date seems to be an exaggeration. The capital city of Prome was called Therekhetra (Strikshetra) which according to Chinese source was the capital of Pyu. When Mahathambwa died he left his wife who conceived a child. Sulathambwa the younger brother and successor of Mahathambwa took the widow to wife. She gave birth to a son whom they gave the name Dwat-tabaung also written as Dut-tabaung. The word Dwat-tabaung is a mixed formation of Aryan and Mongoloid words, Dwata is a Sanskrit word *dr̥itva* meaning two indicating Dwat-tabaung a child or son begotten by two brothers. The legend further says that Dwat-tabaung was also called Twat-tabaung because he is said to have three eyes. The Burmese chronicle Tagaung Yazawin says that Kan Rajangyi son of Abhi Raja moved down the Irrawaddy and the Chindwin and founded a dynasty at Kale. The seat of administration was at Kyaukpadaung, and he placed his son Muduchitta (Madhuchitra) as the ruler of Pyu, Kanran and Sak tribes. Tambula is believed to be the last ruler of Kyaukpadaung who belonged to a lineal descendant of Muducitta. The Burmese rulers claimed their descent from Mahathambwa. The origin of Mahathambwa is not clearly known

as the dates found in these chronicles are much antedated. One contrary indication is that the Pyu inscriptions show that a Vikrama dynasty ruled at Prome. Dwat-tabaung is said to be a Pyu chief. A Pyu prince visited the court of China in 802 A.D. in which the followers of the prince sang a song which contained Sanskrit words. Soon after the destruction of Pyu kingdom by the Man rebels in the year 832 A.D., prince Pinhya shifted northwards and established himself at Pagan where the great Anawrahta was born in the 11th century A.D. Whatever the origin of the Pyu rulers may be it is seen that the word formations of the tribe to which early Prome rulers belonged and the tribe to which Poireiton belonged, are in the same form. The formation of Dwat-tabaung and Shing-tabaung, are not cases of coincidence, but basically similar structures. It therefore strongly suggests that Mahathambwa was a Sakiyan origin.

It may be mentioned here that a Tibeto-Burman tribe called Poi is found to have inhabited in the 18th century A.D. in the lower course of the Manipur river near Kalemyo. The Poi tribe is also called Palam Chin. Their dialect belonged to the Kuki-Chin of the Tibeto-Burman of the Sino-Tibetan family of language. The Poi tribes appear to be closely akin to the Lu-shai tribe if not to the Himalayan tribes. It may not be far too wrong to assume that these Poi were originally belonged to some other neo-Tibetans who were ruled by Poireiton's tribe, who continued to stay at Lei but in course of time they got mixed with other tribes so much so that they appear to have changed substantially both linguistically and racially from their origin. It seems the Poi moved from Lei and sojourned here and there from about the 13th century A.D. Some Pouis entered Manipur possibly in the 15th century A.D. in the north-east. The Poi village in the north-east in the Ukhrul sub-division is perhaps their early settlement. The Poi in Manipur seems to have mixed with the Tangkhuls and Marings and lost their independent identity.

As for the ethnic identity of Poireiton it is not separately discussed here as he was the younger brother of Thongaren. He

belonged to the Himalayan tribe Chakkha (Sakya) and one of the descendants of Abhi Raja the Sakyan king who ruled at Tagaung in the 2nd century B C. or Dhaja Raja. By the time they migrated to Imphal valley, they became much mixed with the Tai particularly the Nungs

The causes of their migration to this land may be investigated as follows. The prime cause of their migration is believed to be the political upheaval happening to the east of their principality in the closing part of the 8th century A D and beginning of the 9th century A D. It is said that Kolo-feng the Nan Chao ruler who ascended the throne in 718 A D defeated the Tibetan forces. Since then the pressure of Tai was felt upon them. The Nan Chao made friendship with Tibet again after a clash, however it broke away during the reign of I mou shun the immediate successor to Kolo-feng who died in the 778 A D. In 795 A D a hostility arose between Nan Chao and Tibet, and since then there had been protracted wars between the two kingdoms. I-mou-shun very badly defeated the Tibetan forces, it is said that the hands of several thousand Tibetan soldiers were cut and took sixteen Tibetan cities into his possessions<sup>7</sup>. I-mou shun died in 809 A D. This political upheaval had made the hive of the innumerable tribes to disintegrate and had made them to flee towards the west and the south. As a result of it a large number of 'Tibeto Burmans, neo-Burmese, tribes of Tai and other Asiatic origin inhabited the area entered Assam, Manipur and Burma. Thus most of the tribes inhabiting north eastern parts of India arrived at about the above period. The Khasi and Jaintia group of Mongoloids were not the inhabitants of the hive, they were inhabitants of north-western and western Thailand who left their homeland sometime in the 10th or 11th century A D. Tribes of Bodo origin like Koch, Kachari, Garo etc are believed to have entered India by about this period i.e. the closing part of the 8th century A.D. Of the tribes of Bodo origin the Garos seem to have mixed with

7. Dr. Gogoi. Tai and Tai kingdom, page 7)

the Funans who arrived in the north-east India by the 11th century A.D

In the migration, Poireiton was accompanied by tribes like Nung, Hou, Man besides his own tribe Unlike other tribes inhabiting north-eastern regions of India who had some traditions and fabulous accounts of migration, Poireiton and his horde had a systematic account of migration though preserved orally till written down possibly in the 15th century A.D. by some scripts other than the Meitei script which developed in the latter part of the 16th century A.D This indicates Poireiton was worth the name of a prince.

In the concluding part of another manuscript of the text Poireiton Khunthok, it is stated that, "*Hayee-ngeiqi Chungkhong Poireiton-gi, Liri Liphongbi, mangwar tungwarbi, saji langkappi, Ningol Saranbagi wibi Naothingkhong meina waina tangna sambadi ashne hayee-ngeiqi khomom lawa achetpa ashbu, kamlak chokpi, hurchi thangchiba, Khamnung langonba, Sawa palkelababu, Poiri ontesheibu wakamna, khamlang pa wari ningdana, irngpu wari kaodana hawrambabu Nungbal Hongnem Luwang Punshiba, charon manga nemjuki, suron taruk tanphangnei, pakhang kumshing lolkhong samjinner . . .*".

The above may be rendered as follows "This is the story of the activities of Chungkhong Poireiton and his associate ladies Liri, Liphongbi and his son Ningol Saran(ba) in the *Hayee* (Satya Yuga) These secret stories of the gods and goddesses of the *Hayee* which could regenerate life to the death, which could activate the loss of stamina, which could rekindle the vital force to a dying man, were narrated by Hongnem the long lived Luwang king, who remained alive upto his 6th descendants, who regenerated his youthful vigour for the sixth time, to Naothingkhong who joined the trail of these ancestors late .. "

It may be noted that Naothingkhong was educated in the Luwangs when Hongnem the Luwang king was alive. He was taught in the art of administration. He received instructions on

the hymns of *Ougri*, rituals of sacrifices and other worships. The earlier name of Naothingkhong was Khunjao. When he was a student of Hongnem he was known as Hongnem-yoy Khunjao. Hongnem the Luwang king died while Naothingkhong was in Luwangs and Ura Konthouba the father of Naothingkhong too died while he was in the Luwangs. It seems Ura Konthouba died a little later than Hongnem.

## PAKHANGBA

Like that of Poiraiton we have to depend entirely on literary sources available locally about the origin and parentage of Pakhangba. Almost all literary accounts mystify the origin of Pakhangba. A man coming down from heaven a hypothetical non-existent abode became king on this mortal world is absurd. Had there been a Pakhangba as one of its kings on this land he must have his father and mother who belonged to some racial groups. We pick up the following sources which give immense material for finding out the parentage and origin of Pakhangba.

We find different literary accounts mentioning two names of the mother of Pakhangba, namely (a) Lei-ning Yabirok and (b) Lei-ning Yabi Yakkha Chanu. The second one however appears to be some adjectives of Yabiroka and not necessarily a different person.

(1) Khagemba Yumbi "*Leinung yabi Yakkha Chanu, Chakkha nurol pirol yambi, yumjao leima oibi, leima ahumlak saionbi, ningthou ahumlak onna leima oibi, Lei-ning Yabirok-na Nongta lairen Pakhangba-ne*", meaning "Lei-ning girl Yakkha girl—polyandrous Chakkha—a house wite—became wife of three different kings—became wife of three kings in turn—Lei-ning Yabiroka begets Nongta 'chief of Lai' Pakhangba"

The literal meaning of the passage is as follows: 'Lei-ning Yabiroka a Yakkha girl who was polyandrous and who became the wife of three individuals in turn gave birth to Nongta Lauren Pakhangba'.

(2) Lei-ning yabi Yakkha chanu laihui: "*Lei-ning yabi Yakkha chanu panthou mapa pokpu chatana laihuibadi Therelongbam chanu-na laihuiye, palem mama pokpu chatana laihuibadi Lerphonngambina chatana laihuiye, palem mama pokpu sana liklai yenbadi Tongthangnu-na sana liklai yelle, Pakhangba pokye*".

The meaning is, 'Lei-nung girl Yakkha girl - father's mother-born by Therelongbam girl - mother's mother - born by Leiphon Ngambi - mother's father Tongthangau - Pakhangba born'.

The literal meaning of the passage is, 'Pakhangba was born by a girl who belonged to Lei-nung Yakkha, whose maternal grandmother was Leiphon Ngambi, whose grandfather was Tongthangnu and whose grandmother was a Therelongbam girl'.

These two sources indicate the mother of Pakhangba belonged to a Lei-nung Yakkha tribe.

(3) Ningthourol Lambuba : "*Nayol Meitei-leima Lei-nung Yabirok Chakkha, nurol pirol yambi, yoibu-yoihen saphabi, leimu sekthakpa, Leihou seng-oiba chanu, Chakkha nuronbi, Chakkha nong-lenbi, nuyam saphabi, leima ahumlak saionbi, Salai khunmabi, Chakkha nurol pirol yambi-O toune kouye*", meaning, "The Grandmother or Madam Meitei Queen Lei-nung Chakkha Yabirok, is known, polyandrous, handsome and beautiful, the cream of the Leihou and Leimu, the Chakkha who is polyandrous and who becomes wife of three kings successively, by thy name".

The central meaning of this passage is practically the same as the two above texts except an important addition to the name of the tribe to which Yabiroka belonged to a Leihou tribe. Relying on this account we find that Yabiroka was a Leihou. ✓

(4) Leithak Leikharol : "*Taobiroinaina pokpa, Atingkokna yenpa ; Leikak Leiyanu chanuna pokpa, Kojintuthokpana yenpa ; Leitanglen chanu-na pokpa, Leishanglen-na yenpa , Leiphuren chanu-na pokpa, Leitonglen-na yenpa . Konphu Leiphu chanu-na pokpa, Leitanglen Tangsangbana yenpa . Laiyek Larkot chanu-na pokpa, Konsouren-na yenpa . Leimung yabi Yakkha chanu-na pokpa, Sentrenq na yenpa ; Laisra-na pokpa, . Pakhangba-na yenpa ; Khui pokye' .*

The meaning of the above passage is as follows : "Born by Taobiroinai, begotten by Atingkok ; born by Leikak Leiyanu, begotten by Kojintuthokpa ; born by Leitanglen, begotten by Leishanglen ; born by Leiphuren, begotten by Leitonglen ; born



by Konphu Leiphu, begotten by Leitanglen Tangsangba, born by Laiyek Laikot, begotten by Konsouru, born by Leinung yabi Yakkha, begotten by Sentieng, born by Laisa-ra, begotten by Pakhangba, Khui was born.

This account refers to a pedigree of Pakhangba beginning from Atinkok upto his Khui-yoi Tompok. The pedigree given in this text is purely a fabulous one except the last case. Since the name 'Pakhangba' is being incorporated, the fable cannot be developed earlier than the 16th century A D which will be seen in subsequent parts. Moreover it is also doubtful how the people would collect the materials for such a long pedigree while these tribes lived in wilderness. The father of Pakhangba is described here to be one man named Sentieng Atinkok, Kojintuthokpa, Sentreng, Kuptreng etc were some prominent persons of different periods and they are made to associate with Pakhangba in some some way or the other by the fable makers. Hence there is no reliability on this text. It appears however Sentreng and Kuptreng (not mentioned in the above text) are Austro-Asiatic Mon-Khmer group people who came to this land as late as the closing part of the 11th century A D or later.

Besides the above mentioned texts there are more manuscripts which are all fables and not discussed here. After examining some of the above literary accounts available with us we are able to conclude that the mother of Pakhangba was Yabiroka a girl belonging to the Lei-hou tribe. The Lei of Lei-hou was a Chakkha belonging to Yakkha clan.

The word *Yabi* in Yabiroka means 'girl' in the dialect of the early Poireis. *Yabi*, *Chabi* and *Sabi* are the same words of which *Chabi* is the earliest and then comes *Yabi* and finally *Sabi*. But the word *Sabi* changes its modern connotation slightly and found to have been used for both girls and boys while addressing their sweet hearts like *Sabi ibema* to the girls and *Sabi ibungo* to the boys. However if it stands alone it means girl. The words or clause *Yabi Yakkha charu Yabiroka* is equivalent to the modern words or clause *Sabi Sakya chanu Yabiroka* or still in the more

common language *Sabi Sakya ningol Yabiroka* where *ningol* is more popular than *chunu* with slight differences in connotations

It is therefore seen that the real part of the name of the mother of Pakhangba is 'Roka' Thus the name Yabiroka may be split up into two parts, Yabi and Roka. In the above stated words *Lei-nung* mean 'Nung people of Lei' or an amalgamated tribe of Lei and Nung, *Yakkha* means a name of a sub-olan and *Chakkha* means a name of a tribe. Thus Yabiroka belonged to a *Yakkha* sub-clan of *Chakkha* tribe inhabited in the Khams region and their habitat became known as 'Lei' where Nung people also inhabited. The tribe *Lei-hou* indicates an amalgamation of Lei and Hou. Lei is a Himalayan tribe and Hou (which may be pronounced as Ao) a Sino-Tibetan tribe. It seems these tribes had social intercourse before their arrival in present Manipur.

The next step will be the investigation of the father of Pakhangba. The father of Pakhangba is concealed in most of the literary accounts so far available. As Yabiroka was polyandrous, it seems, there must have been some confusions of the father and taking the advantage of it the mystifiers and fable makers perhaps projected Nongta (Pakhangba) as the son of God partly to please their autocrate rulers who were descendants of Nongta (Pakhangba). There is no human history in which the son of God became king, as stated earlier Pakhangba must have his father in flesh and blood. In this regard some Puyas i.e. literary accounts dealing with the father of Pakhangba are taken up as follows: (1) Sanggai Phammang, (2) Meihourol Makok Latam, (3) Pakhangba Nonggarol, (4) Leimaren Naoyom, (5) Leithak Leikharol, (6) Krathok Lamlen, (7) Ningthourol Seireng etc.

In (1) Sanggai Phammang it is stated that after the creation of the universe and man, the Almighty instructed the man to live on the earth. Then the Almighty left along with Atiya (Atinga) Sidaba and king Apanba for the Sun. The god who created the earth left for the Moon. Atiya Sidaba on seeing the image of himself ordered god Taoroinai who lived on the Moon to carry the

image of Atiya Sidaba on to the earth. Taoroinai brought the image by swallowing in his mouth. He came down along with the image and lived inside the earth. The name Yabiroka was thus developed and the god who came down from the Sun was thus born as a male child.

In (2) Meihourol Makok Latam it is stated that Atiya Sidaba wished to make a king on the earth brought from within himself Leima-ren the goddess and ordered Leima-ren to call Taoroinai the god of the Moon who creates the earth. Leimaren asked Taoroinai to bring the god which was inside the image of that god which assumed the shape of *Nonglum* 'egg of cloud' and she received the egg. That is the reason why she is called Yabiroka.

In (3) Pakhangba Nonggarol it is stated that, when the creation was completed Taoroinai brought the god from the centre of the Sun as a sperm within his body and gave it Lei-nung Yabiroka.

In (4) Leima-ren Naoyom it is stated Leimaren the goddess came down from the Sun and received the embryonic egg brought by Taoroinai. At this stage the name of Pakhangba was *Aung san tarang tarang norgsan ngantarang tarang san norgsan*. When Pakhangba was inside the Sun his name was *Tik-Tik*, and when in the womb of Yabiroka he was known as *Leitarang nongtarang leihingshi khak huk tik tik tamarik*. When Pakhangba was born he was called *Nongta Tukuplik*.

In (5) Krakthok Lamlen and (6) Leithak Leikharol, it is stated as follows: "*Taoroinai-na Tupu oina numitu kakh'ye. Ating-ngana Pakhangbabu nonglum oina Tupuda piramyé, Taoroi aina Tupu sangei-gi maming-d. Likleng kouye . . . Tupu-na leima ahumlak oibida pitharakye.....maming di Nongta Tukuplik kouye*".

The literal meaning of it is as follows: "Taoroinai went up the sky in the guise of a *Tupu* (meaning officer-in-charge or guide) and got the egg which would become Pakhangba from Atiya Sidaba. The name of Taoroinai when he was under the guise of a *Tupu* was Likleng..... *Tupu* gave the egg to the 'polyandrous'

who had three husbands successively ... the name was Nongta Tukuplik”.

In (7) Ningthourol Seireng it is stated that the ‘egg of cloud’ was brought by Puleilomba in his mouth and gave it to Leinung Yabirok who after incubating it gave birth to Pakhangba. The language of the text indicates the writing was very recent. It mentions the day of the week, the month and *Yuthok* (Jamardha) of the day of birth of Pakhangba. The above elements were used in casting horoscopes. So the devising of the fable cannot be earlier than the 18th century A D

As a complementary to the above text, it may be mentioned that two more but less fabulous accounts namely *Theirel Meiram Leeba* and *Meihourol Lathup Lalam* which describe the father of Pakhangba was Luwang Langmaiba simply also called Luwang who chased away Puleilomba to be the father of Pakhangba when the child (Pakhangba) was born. Thus Puleilomba became recognised father of Pakhangba though he was begotten in the womb of Yabiroka by Luwang Langmaiba. Unlike other accounts, Meihourol Lathup say, that the mother of Pakhangba was Liklabicha. However in other accounts like Serei Salarol published by State Kala Akademi, Liklabicha Tongdau, he is found to have given birth to two sons namely Mandom and Khodom, the former became Luwang while the latter became Angom. About Luwang who was the husband of Liklabicha the texts contradict each other. Sarei Salarol depicts that Luwang = Luwang Langmaiba while *Theirel Meiram Leeba* describes him to be Luwang Punshiba who was the grandfather of Luwang Langmaiba.

By the by, it appears from the above text, that Liklabicha was first married to Luwang Langmaiba and gave birth to a son named Mandom. She then married to Puleilomba and gave birth to a son named Khodom. The name with the suffix ‘-cha’ indicates that she was a Mayang or Mangang or any other tribe influenced by the Bodos.

We have so far examined several fables and half fabulous accounts in an attempt to find out the father of Pakhangba. In

this attempt we have not only found out the father but also we get the original name of Pakhangba. Now we conclude from the above investigations that the father of Pakhangba was "Likleng" and the name of Pakhangba given by his parents was "Nongta Tukuplik" and in shortened form 'Nongta'.

*Tupu* and *lambu* were the names of posts under the Poirei kings. The functions of these posts were to be officers-in-charge or guides of a tribe. Sometimes it is used by compounding the two words like *lambu-tupu*. We will investigate who was *Tupu Likleng* in the latter part of this article.

Our next task is the investigation of the number of brothers and sisters, half-brothers and half-sisters of Pakhangba. One of the best accounts, Ningthourol Lambuba, refers to only one younger sister named *Sira Konthing-nu*. She is found to have been mentioned in several other accounts also. One curiosity is that how the fable makers and mystifiers left her unaccounted when all her father, mother and brother are mystified. It is not known whether she was a half sister or not but this much is certain that she was a uterine sister of Pakhangba.

*Sira Konthing-nu* is known in accounts of Manipur for her skill in dressing and cooking meat specially beef. Quoting the text Ningthourol Lambuba, which states, "*Konou numtmadi manbi chaklei-kao kaoren leigba shan tubi Yoixongta lairen Pakhangba machan Sira Konthing-nu phamel mukmu haimeichon thangychi yatoulen saren leitoy-yat sunggai chikhony cheng saku ualong than wanglen khordou otha Kang lei lamtababu saku walong-nung walong ningkothakki thangychi masen tinnarakye. Saren masen paknarakye*". The gist of the above passage is, 'One day the meat of that sacrificed young cow was chopped into smaller pieces and cooked by *Sira Konthing-nu* the younger sister of Pakhangba in which the meat was much stired and cooked that the meat disintegrated'. This cooking of meat was in connection with the feast of resolution of a feud between the family of Yaoreiba and their neighbours arising out of the loss of chicken pigs, ducks, goats etc.

in which the Yaoreibas charged their neighbours responsible for the loss of their pigs, chicken etc. and the neighbours counter-charged the Yaoreibas responsible for the loss of their white goats. Both the parties searched in vain for their lost livestock. The parties said their search or quarrel was nothing but a *leirang atinga* meaning a 'flower in sky' which has no physical existence and agreed to resolve their feud by sacrificing a young cow. The sacrificed animal was cooked by Sira Konthing-nu. In another occasion when her nephew Khunvoi Tompok the son of Pakhangba, who attempted to devise a sounding drum with hides of different animals but failed to achieve the desired sound, she skinned off the hide of a young cow and used the hide where they got the desired sound

Since Sira Konthing-nu was in the Chakkha-Nung settlement at Kangla-tongbi, her uterine brother Nongta is also supposed to be in that settlement before he assumed the chieftainship of the Lei-Nungs and Lei-Hous. In that case both of them belonged to the Chakkha-Nung, they cannot be strangers specially in those early days. It is also not equally impossible to suppose that Sira Konthing-nu was married to a man of the Chakkha-Nung of Kangla-tongbi from the house of her maternal grand-father at or near Kongba-nu the source of the Kongba stream. It is also not known whether Luwang Punshiba was still alive in the time of his sixth descendant i.e. Yaoreiba since Luwang Punshiba is probably the most exceptionally long lived king of Poirei and is found to have been described in literary accounts and traditions that he lived upto his 6th descendant and regenerated his youthful vigour for the 5th time. Assuming that he lived for some, say 100 years, there is every reason to say that upto the time of Yaoreiba he was alive had Yaoreiba been the eldest of the eldest descendants and the youngest son of Luwang Punshiba born by his youngest wife was probably in his teens. Since Sira Konthing-nu was a contemporary of Yaoreiba or his descendants there is every reason to say that Pakhangba was also a contemporary of the descendants of Yaoreiba or at the most of Yaoreiba himself. It is likely that

Nongta moved from Kangla-tongbi to the areas of Kongba-ru where the Lei-Nungs settled when he was invited to become their chief where he had a quarrel with Anganga who belonged to a Kou(ba) tribe over the reclamation of non-marshy land.

At the moment it is difficult to find out under what circumstances Yabiroka had three husbands. It is also equally difficult to know that she had the three husbands simultaneously or in succession, we also do not know whether *Tupu* Lalkeng was the first husband or not. The meaning of the above referred texts gives both the state of affairs. It is more likely that she married in succession. However this gives us one of the best materials for the social anthropology of the early Poireis.

We do not find any other brother or sister of Pakhangba other than his younger sister Sira Konthing-nu. There is traditional belief of the Tangkhuls inhabiting the north eastern parts of present Manipur. In their traditions it is said that a Tangkhul left his home for the valley leaving behind his brothers and became king in the valley. While he was leaving for the valley he asked his brothers to see a huge column of smoke from the valley every year in a particular season to acknowledge his physical existence. Tangkhul is not a homogeneous tribe, it is an admixture of Lei, Hou and Khu with elements of Nung of which a good bulk of Lei, Khu became a constituent part of the Meiteis. On the other hand, if they failed to see the column of smoke they could presume that he was no more. The tradition further mentions that it was he who became known as Pakhangba. This tradition cannot be pushed too far as the name Pakhangba existed only from the 16th century A.D. However it may at the most be presumed that Pakhangba had some brothers who continued to stay in their maternal grandfather's house with their mother who later became Tangkhuls.

It is quite likely that Yabiroka could have given birth to some more children. If we are to believe the Tangkhul traditions, Pakhangba must have some half-brothers and sisters.

It is seen from different accounts that Pakhangba had some eighteen cognomen. They are (1) Nongta Tukuplik, (2) Nongtreng

Apumba, (3) Leinung Lonja Ariba, (4) Laloyang Tanouba, (5) Nongpok Poklen, (6) Umtha Nungthou Yoiremba, (7) Ching-wang Ningthou Atengba, (8) Laiyingthou Apanba, (9) Ching-U Langba Apanba, (10) Leinung Lonja Pakhangba, (11) Lai Pakhang Atengba, (12) Tangja Leela Pakhangba, (13) Lolang Pakhangba, (14) Tubi Yoi Nongta, (15) Nongta Lairen Pakhangba, (16) Ningthem, (17) Sana and (18) Javista.

All the above stated names except Nongta Tukupluk were given posthumously by the fable makers and mystifiers in the 16th and 17th century A.D. when the society in the valley was intoxicating in the pursuit of Tantric culture, in order to please the autocrat rulers who were descendants of Nongta Tukuplik.

It was most probably during the early part of Khagemba (1597-1652 A.D.) the fable makers projected Nongta to be the Pakhangba of the Sanamahi-Pakhangba legend of the Kege-Moirang. Not only Nongta was projected to be the Pakhangba, Khagemba too adopted the Lai title *Lairen* for the first time by the Poirei kings as recorded in Cheitharol Kumbaba, as well as the Kege-Moirang title *Sara* for princesses and princes. Since then the princes and princesses of the Poireis became known as *Sana*. Prior to Khagemba the title for the Poirei kings was *Meidung-ngu*, and princesses and royal ladies were exclusively called *Leima*. The word *Leima* was also in use in Kege-Moirang. In order to avoid confusion the name Pakhangba for Nongta is however retained throughout this book except otherwise mentioned.

Each name of the above is found to have associated with a myth. The ultimate result was that the ignorant and superstitious mass took Nongta Tukuplik was a demi-god, and thus established the divine theory of king. Again scholars of the 19th century A.D. under the impact of Vaisnavism further projected Nongta to be an Aryan ruler, where casteism and superiority of race are clearly reflected even in Cheitharol Kumbaba.

In the names occurring in serial No. (3) and (10) of the above we find a term 'Leinung Lonja' where Lonja 'people belonging to'.



So the meaning of *Leinung Lonja* is 'people belonging to *Leinung*'. As discussed in earlier section that *Leinung* belonged to a neo-Tibetan tribe. This indicates *Pakhangba* was a *Leinung* tribe or he became *Leinung* by convention. It may be mentioned here that some scholars, depending on the fable, took that the term *Leinung* meant, 'inside the earth' and said it was the name when *Pakhangba* ruled inside the earth in the *Hayee Chak* (*Satya Yuga*).

*Pakhangba* married a girl named *La'sa-ra* who belonged to a *Heirong* tribe. *Ningthourol Lambuba* states that she was the daughter of the *Heirong* chieftain *Heirong Longlha Leitham Thamliba*. As discussed in the section on *Heirong*, this tribe belonged to a neo-Burmese tribe of *Tai* origin who got mixed with the neo-Tibetans. It may be pointed out, here, that the name *Laisara* is found to have written as *Laisana* in the writing of the later period, specially *Cheitharol Kumbaba* which was re-written during the period from 1825 A.D to 1835 A.D. It also further mentions that *Laisana* belonged to the tribe of *Poireiton*. The tribe of *Poireiton* is clearly seen to be a Himalayan tribe called *Chakkha* who got mixed with people of *Tai* origin. In short *Poireiton* belonged to the Himalayan tribe *Chakkha* where as *Laisa-ra* belonged to a neo-Burmese tribe of *Tai* origin. While writing about *Laisa-ra* to have belonged to the tribe of *Poireiton*, the intention of the chroniclers seem to project a racial superiority of the tribe of *Pakhangba* to that of *Poireiton* specially when the relations of the two were lost in the later period with the emergence of the *Luwang* and *Mangang* clans. *Pakhangba* is probably assumed by these chroniclers as an *Aryan*.

*Pakhangba* had one paramour named *Konthing Nurabi* belonging to a *Hangoi* tribe. The *Hangoi* was a sub-clan of the *Thoubal* tribe who first inhabited somewhere near present *Litan* in the *Ukhrul* sub-division, later the *Hangois* shifted towards *Pukhao* area. The *Thoubals* were neo-Burmese tribes of mixed origin.

So far we are able to know the racial origin of the mother and wife of *Pakhangba*. Now we are to proceed for the identification of the race to which *Tupu Likleng* belonged. Literary accounts

like Ningthourol Shingkek and Sandrembi (Sanarembi)—Chaise-ra, state that the society there, implicitly means the Leinung society who shifted from Kangla-tongbi to the upper course of the Kongba river as a result of family feud in the Chakkhan family following the death of Luwang Punshiba, was perhaps in a chaos. They wanted an able ruler and invited Pakhangba to become their chief. Pakhangba accepted the invitation and became their chief. If we are to believe in these accounts Pakhangba must have belonged to another tribe other than the Leinungs. Even in those days of the remote past people generally accepted a man of royal blood descent and not the commoners as their king. So the father of Pakhangba, Tupu Likleng must have descended from the ruling line of the Poireis. Yabiroka the mother of Pakhangba belonged to the Leihou tribe as discussed earlier. Pakhangba became a Leinung by convention only, he belonged to the tribe to which his father Tupu Likleng belonged as the society was patriarchal

At the moment we have no concrete material for investigation on the ethnic origin of Tupu Likleng. There is no indication that he was a Leihou tribe. It is most likely that he was either a Nung tribe or Chakkha tribe. The name of his son Nongta suggests that he also belonged to the same tribe to which Yabiroka belonged, or at the most they could have belonged to the different sub-clans of the same tribe. We have very little account referring to the name of the Himalayan tribe in the non-Aiyan way except some references here and there during the Asokan period. Emperor Asoka's father is said to have also the name Nemita. The suffix '-ta' is found to be frequently adopted by the Aryanised Sakya tribe of India. The suffix '-ta' in Nong-ta also suggests him to be of this tribe. The Poirei society as stated above was patriarchal and hence Tupu Likleng belonged to a Chakkha tribe.

The social status of Tupu Likleng may be investigated as follows : As stated above, the literary accounts mention one word 'Tupu' in connection with 'Tupu Likleng. In the political setup of early Poireis a post named 'Dambu' is found. Lambu is an officer-in-charge of a tribe. Thus Leihou Lambu or Lambu of Leihou is a

person in charge of the Leihou tribe, who is an officer of the king. The word Tupu is used in the form of Lambu Tupu which also had a meaning something like 'guide'. It also seems the two words had the same meaning but of different origins. In that case Tupu means officer-in-charge. The text says that the father of Pakhangba was a Tupu. It is therefore most probable that Nongta (Pakhangba) was the son of the officer-in-charge of the Leihou. From mediaeval to modern context Lambu is generally appointed from amongst the persons belonging to tribes other than the tribe itself. Assuming this practice was also prevalent in the early days too, the Leihou Lambu must have belonged to a person other than the Leihous. In early period such administrative officers were generally appointed from the ruling family or the ruling clan. Relying on this practice Tupu Likleng must have belonged to some persons of the large family of Luwang Punshiba (c. 910-980 A.D.) or other descendants of Poireiton. It may be noted that the early Poireis were very particular about the blood line of their rulers. No one other than the blood line of the ruling group could claim the throne. Taking into account of Meihourol Lathup and Thoerel Meiran Lecba there is every reason to believe Luwang Langmaiba had another name Likleng. Since Nongta became the chief of the Lemung and the Leihou inhabiting the upper Iril valley besides the Mahou, Khung-khung, Leitha, Mantak etc. he must have belonged to the ruling line of the Poireis lest people would neither accept him nor he could claim the chieftainship. Luwang Langmaiba or Likleng could have been appointed the Lambu or Tupu of the Leihou tribe by the Poirei king Luwang Punshiba in his old days.

Thus we conclude that Nongta (Pakhangba) was a male child begotten in the womb of Yabiroka the daughter of a Leihou chief by Luwang Langmaiba the titular name of Likleng, one of the grandsons of Luwang Punshiba. In short Pakhangba was one of the descendants of Luwang Punshiba the Chakkha.

Cheitharol Kumbaba indicates that Pakhangba lived for almost an absurd period of some 160 years and he was on the throne for

120 years as discussed in earlier sections, that he must have ascended the throne at about 30 years age or so. We will examine for how long he lived. The period under consideration was days of working and hence a rapid ageing period with few exceptions. People usually got very old at about 50 years of age. Pakhangba could have been older than his younger sister Sira Konthing-nu by about one year in the minimum to about 20 years at the most, however taking the optimum we may very reasonably assume that Pakhangba was older than his sister by, say, 5 years. Sira Konthing-nu is found to be very active in the time of Khuiyoi Tompok the son of Pakhangba and she cannot be expected to be much older than 50 years of age by that period. The text indicates that Khuiyoi Tompok succeeded Pakhangba quite young as evident from his lack of proper wisdom indicating a second class life of Pakhangba and he could have died before the age of 50 years. However we have allotted him about 60 years in the construction of tentative dates.

The reason for the invitation or selection for the chieftainship of the Leinung and Leihou is that Pakhangba was the grand-son of the Leihou chief and son of the *Lambu-Tupu* (officer-in-charge) of the Leinung and Leihou under the Poirer king, and one the great-grandsons of the Poirer king Luwang Punshiba and blood line of the royalty.

When the original principality of Poireriton ruled by his descendants which was later known as the Luwang principality became weaker and weaker in power, and on the other hand the principality to which Pakhangba belonged which was later known as the Mangang principality grew more and more powerful, the Mangang principality subdued the Luwang principality. As time passed on people could not recollect Pakhangba was one of the descendants of Poireriton, the Mangang chroniclers often attacked Poireriton, they invented many stories in which Pakhangba was made to fight with his ancestor Poireriton and also projected Pakhangba to have belonged to another race other than that of Poireriton and inserted in their writings a racial superiority of

Pakhangba to that of Poireiton. It may be noted that the Luwang principality had the influence of the Nung people, a Tai origin and on the other hand the Mangang principality was influenced by the Mangang Hao, a Tibeto-Burman tribe of Bodo origin. Not to speak of these remote days, even the descendants of Pamheiba, which is hardly two and a half centuries of modern period, who are now known as Narasingh, Karta, Mantrimayum etc, pose among themselves for superiority but with a different tone and that they remember they are the descendants of Pamheiba, being a modern period. If it were in the early period and at the same time they maintained separate principalities fighting one another for supremacy and the different chroniclers invented different stories and inserted them in their respective chronicles, then we would have met the same fate of Poireiton and Pakhangba. Taking the advantage of the similarity of names of the mother of Poireiton with that of Laisa-ra, which is Piyai-nu (Priya-nu), the Mangang chroniclers projected Laisa-ra to be the younger sister of Poireiton who actually lived some two centuries earlier than Laisa-ra. Prince Charles is not the son of Queen Elizabeth who ruled England in the 16th century A. D. and remained unmarried. Cheitharol Kumbaba, however does not explicitly mention Laisa-ra to be the younger sister of Poireiton but leaves with certain ambiguity. It states, "Who came along with Poireiton in the migration". All such invented stories have made our investigation all the more time consuming. ✓

The parentage of Yabiroka the mother of Pakhangba, given by the account 'Lei-nung Yabirok Laihui', a manuscript, states, "*Jenung Yabirok panthou mama jokpu lakhubadi Yakkhu Yabiren nu lakhurye. Palem mama pokpu chatunu lakhubadi Leryaren-na chatana laihuiye. Palem mamu pokpu sana liklai yenbadi yotleima Saya-nu sala ihambinu sara liklai yelle*". The literal meaning of this passage is, 'The father of Yabiroka is born by Yakkha Yabiren. The mother' father i.e. her maternal grandfather is Leyaren and maternal grandmother is Saya-nu who was given the title Yotleima and progenitor of a 'sala'. The text however does not mention

her father and mother. It is difficult to rely solely on the writing of this text. The language of the text clearly indicates that it is a modern language. So at the most we can assume that the scholar who wrote this account might have collected his materials from some other accounts and entered Yakkha Yabiren as her grandfather. It seems Yakkha Yabiren was her father and Saya-nu a prominent lady was her grandmother. Relying on this account the maternal grandfather and maternal grandmother of Yabiroka were Leiyaren and Saya-nu respectively,

The parentage of Laisa-ra the wife of Pakhangba according to the account '*Laisa-ra Laihui*' a manuscript, is given as follows. "*Heirong-len chanu panthou muja pokpu chatanu laihuibadi Leinung Pishin-nu na laihuiye. Palem mamu pokpu chatanu laihuibadi Nga bu Yu-Chakha na chatanu laihuiye. Palem mamu pokpu sana liklai yenbadi Nga-nu Piyai-nu na sana liklai yelle*". The literal meaning of this passage is, 'The father of that Heirong lady (which means Laisa-ra who is said to have belonged to a Heirong tribe) was born by a lady named Pishin-nu who belonged to a Lei-Nung tribe. Her father was born by a man named Nganba who belonged to a Yu-Chakha tribe and a lady named Piyai-nu who belonged to a Nga tribe'. The meaning is rather confusing. It may be mentioned here that the tribe Nga is called Anga in the Indian mythology and in the Mongoloid world they are called Nga-nu, and the name Piyai is derived from the Pali word Piya which corresponds to Priya of Sanskrit. Unlike the former one this text clearly states that the father of Laisa-ra was born by Pishin-nu, a lady who belonged to a Lei Nung tribe. As discussed earlier the father of Laisa-ra is Heirong Longliba Leitham Thamliba who belonged to a Heirong tribe. From this account it is seen that the family of Laisa-ra belonged to a mixed tribe of Heirong, Lei, Nung and Nga.

## MORIYA PHAMBALLACHA

The Kege principality as used to be called by the Poireis, was a part of the Moriya kingdom. Its rulers were Moriya princes. The Kege principality flourished for about one and half century from about 1100 A.D. to about 1260 A.D. The account of this principality is lost except some references. The Moriya prince Moriya Phamballacha is perhaps the founder of this principality or perhaps the Moriya ruler who shifted his capital to the southern side of Imphal valley. The Manipuri accounts refer to Moriya princes only when they were active on the southern parts of Imphal valley and no reference is given while they were in Moriya or Kabow valley. Moriya is found to have also been written as Mori, Mori-ba and Muwa e.g. Mori Loushingba, Mori-ba Naosha-su etc.

It is not known who succeeded Moriya Phamballacha but the descendants who ruled the Kege principality at about 1260 A.D. is found to be one prince named Oinu Seng Raja (Oinu Sengba-racha) believed to be the 7th or 8th descendant of Moriya Phamballacha. In the literary account Ninthourol Lambuba, the name is found to have written as Oinu Sengbaracha<sup>1</sup>. The name of the widow queen of Binnaka Raja is Nag Seng<sup>2</sup> who is said to be a 'true Sakiyan'. More details are discussed in the section on Haokap, Chingshang, Khunpham and Ngangheng. Here also the word 'seng' is found in Oinu *Seng-ba-ra-cha*. Since the suffix '-ba' is a Tibeto-Burman and hence the name may be read as Oinu Seng Raja. It may also be mentioned here that the word 'seng' is also frequently adopted by the Tai inhabiting eastern and northern Burma. It is during Oinu Seng Raja's reign that the Kegos destroyed the principality at Lamangdong ruled by the aristocratic Bangals. The inhabitants of Lamangdong principality

1. Ninthourol Lambuba, edited by O. Bhogswar Singh, page-47.

2. Glass Palace Chronicle, page-30.

were Bangals, proto-Bangals and Tibeto-Burman Mayangs. Possibly after destroying the Lamangdong principality the Keges attacked the Poirais where they got the worst reverses in which 763 Keges according to Ningthourol Lambuba<sup>3</sup> and 63 Keges (written as Moirangs) according to Cheitharol Kumbaba<sup>4</sup> were killed. It is mentioned that Moriya Oinu Seng Raja was captured alive by the Poirai king Khongtekcha. Along with the downfall of the Keges another tribe, the Moirang led by Thangjing Koirel Lai arrived and settled near the scattered principality of the Kege at Ngangkha-rawai at about 1270 A.D. Prior to their coming down to the valley, the Moirangs inhabited the hill now known as the Thangjing hill. Later the Keges and the Moirangs amalgamated into one political unit under the name Kege-Moirang principality with a chief whose ethnic origin was of Lai. More details on Lai are discussed in the section on Moirang.

Different chroniclers of later period brought Moriya Phamballaacha into the genealogy of some clans in a fabulous way. Nongbal chroniclers put him as a Nongbal tribe. One prominent person named Kangba who belonged to an Asiatic tribe called Kang which later amalgamated with the Nongbal tribe, who probably lived in the 11th century A.D. had been projected to be the brother or father of Moriya Phamballaacha in a fabulous way. In another account Moriya Phamballaacha is described to be the ancestor of Konthoujam Lairembi, the Umang Lai. But none of the accounts mention Moriya Phamballaacha to have belonged to the Moriya clan of the Sakya tribe.

In Ningthourol Lambuba we find here and there names like Kamiya,<sup>5</sup> Tariya,<sup>6</sup> Tontiya,<sup>7</sup> Samtuya,<sup>8</sup> Rasika<sup>9</sup> etc. of Pali

3. Ningthourol Lambuba, edited by O. Bhogeswar Singh, pages-47.
4. Cheitharol Kumbaba, published by the Manipuri Sahitya Parishad, p.-3.
5. Ningthourol Lambuba, edited by O. Bhogeswar Singh, page-175.
6. *ibid.*, page-133.
7. *ibid.*, page-176.
8. *ibid.*, page-201.
9. *ibid.*, page-222.



origin which belonged to the Kege principality. It appears other tribes also got the impact of the Moriya culture and adopted the above type of names. The Moriya of Kabow valley and its surrounding areas were from Pippalivana of the Middle country. The Moriyas brought with them the pre-Buddhist type of culture of the Middle country that was present in the 2nd and 3rd century B.C.

The evidence of the Kege principality flourishing in art and literature is seen from the following accounts. In different literary accounts it is mentioned that Moriya Phamballacha introduced a calendar. It is also said that he introduced the counting of the flux of time by an era system. As the accounts of the Kegees are lost, it is not possible to find the epoch of the era and more over the adoption of the era is also lost. At the most it may be expected to be in the first half of the 12th century A.D. In the calendar of Moriya Phamballacha there are twelve months in a Tropical year. He inserted the rainy season to be the month of Inga. In short, in his calendar, monsoon begins to set in the month Inga and begins to retreat in the month of Ingel. These two months are the 3rd and 4th months respectively of modern calendar. The months are Sājibu, Kālen, Ingā, Ingel, Thawāl, Lāngban, Merā, Hiyāngei, Poinu, Wākchung, Phāiren and Lamdā. It is not known from which month the year started according to Moriya Phamballacha calendar. Accounts like Poireriton Khunthok, states that Moriya Phamballacha started the year by *Inga kumdam Ingel kumkhai* meaning 'monsoon setting in Inga, monsoon retreating in Ingel' There is no historical record or account dealing with how the names of the months were given. It is evident that prior to Moriya Phamballacha the seasons and months were probably in chaos, counting the months on lunations gave rise to one month off the season in the third year and the cumulative result would have been six months off the season in about the sixteenth year. It is therefore seen that a particular lunar month was probably named by some people, say Poinu as Mera, some people as Lamda and so on bringing a total chaos.

The earlier people of the Imphal valley could not develop the mathematics for intercalation even though the tribe of Poiraiton had some rudimentary idea of astronomy specially star constellations and their apparent motions but it appears in calendric astronomy they did not possess a workable knowledge. In such a situation Moriya Phamballacha took a step probably with the advice of his astronomers to peg a month with season as the milestone of the new calendar. The common people were ignorant of the observation of motions of heavenly bodies, but they were well acquainted with the changes of the seasons. Thus he fixed the month of Inga and Ingel in the period of rainy season which is a distinctly visible phenomenon. The occurrence of rainy season or onset of monsoon is a regular physical phenomenon depending on the revolution of the earth and precession of equinoxes. The Monsoon sets in the beginning of the second week of June of the Gregorian calendar every year. It is therefore seen that the months of Inga and Ingel are Tropical months. Hence, 'the Moriya Phamballacha year' was a Tropical year unlike the Sidereal year adopted by the Manipuris of to-day and the calendar adopted by Moriya Phamballacha was a crude Solar calendar. It may be noted that the adoption of Luni-Solar calendar by the Manipuris with Sidereal year was from 1485 A.D. In the present Luni-Solar calendar there is no provision for *Shilhenba*, but this function is forced into the framework of the Luni-Solar calendar without any justification. The function *Shilhenba* should categorically be applied to Solar calendars presumably of somewhat crude form. It is accounted from the adoption of equal number of days for each month. A month was allotted 30 days. Thus in 12 months there are only 360 days, falling short of about 5 days and a little more in a year. In order to adjust the shortage, some 5 days in a year were allotted for *Shilhenba*. These extra days were independent of any month. It may be mentioned here that in Egypt in early B.C. people used the flood of the Nile as the milestone of the year. They also had the same pattern of *Shilhenba*.

It is most likely that the *Shilhenba* system was introduced by Moriya Phamballacha in his crude Solar calendar. It is not known

from which month the year started. It is most likely that the year started from the month of Lamda and the adjustment of *Shilhenba* was done in the month of Phairen. There is a tradition that the month would remain stationary in the month of Phairen till the appropriate season comes which however seems from the meaning of *Phai* in modern Manipuri language 'to halt' belonging to a dialect of a tribe that constituted the Meiteis. But the Kege principality had contacts with the Marems a Mon origin in whose dialect *phai* means 'plain', and the suffix *-ren* is a neo-Tibetan origin meaning 'chief'. Thus *Phairen* means 'great valley'. So the function of *Shilhenba* was performed after the completion 30 days of the Phairen month. It is also not known whether the 7-day week system was introduced or not by Moriya Phamballacha or an earlier practice.

The names of months when disintegrated, clearly reflect the presence of the dialects belonging to Mon, Tai and other Austro origins besides Moriya. We may examine the pattern of the names of months by disintegrating as follows : Sajibu (Sachi-*phu*), Kalon (Kā-*len*), Inga (I-*Ngā*), Ingel (I-*Ngel*), Thawan (Thā-*wān*), Langban (Lāng-*ban*), Mera (Me-*rā*), Hiyanggei (Hi-*yāng-kei*), Poinu (Poi-*nu*), Wakching (Wāk-*ching*), Phairen (Phāi-*ren*) and Lamda (Lam-*tā*). Hence these word patterns clearly indicate that the names were originated from the Moriyas. As for the date of existence of these names of months, it cannot be ascertained due to want of materials but in no case they can exist earlier than the 10th century A.D., because the period of arrival of these tribes mentioned above were later than the 10th century A.D.

Whereas, the names of week days are originated from the word Poireis as the formations clearly show the presence of Mangang, Nongmai besides Chakkha formations which will be clearly seen by disintegrating them as follows : Nongmaijing (Nongmai-*ching*), Ningthoukaba (Ningthou-*kāba*), Leipakpokpa (Leipāk-*pokpa*) Yumsakcisa (Yum-*sā kei-sā*), Sagolsen (Sagol-*sen*), Irai (I-*rāi*) and Thangja (Thāng-*chā*). Since there is the presence of Mangang word the period of emergence of the name of week days cannot be

expected to be earlier than the 13th century A.D. the period in which the Mangang became amalgamated with a section of Poireis.

The Sakiyan princes who entered Burma in the second century B.C. (according to the Burmese chronicles 923 B.C.) and in the 3rd century A.D. (according to the Burmese chronicle 523 B.C.) were in touch with the Vedanga Jyotisha only. Vedanga Jyotisha is a crude calendaric astronomy prevalent upto about 300 A.D. There is a clear record of the use of Vedanga Jyotisha during the period of Satavahana (200 A.D.). During Vedanga Jyotisha period the 7-day week system was not in vogue. They used to count the days by Nakshatras. There are 27 Nakshatras and sometimes 28 with the addition one more Nakshatra named Abhujit. The adoption of scientific calendar known as Siddhantic Jyotisha came into use from the Greek. Thus it is seen that a revolutionary change in calendar had been introduced by Moriya Phamballacha.

It appears, since their departure from the Indian mainland they neither developed a more scientific calendar of their own nor the knowledge of the more advanced Indian astronomy had reached them till probably about the 15th century A.D. It was from about this period the knowledge of Siddhantic Jyotisha gradually penetrated into these areas brought by the Brahmin scholars. In India astronomy is intricately associated with the Indian astrology for which it is called Vedanga Jyotisha meaning 'Jyotisha a part of the Veda', expounded by Paraswar the father of Vyasa. Till this date the Paraswar school astrology is regarded the supreme in Indian astrology. The knowledge of astronomy had further penetrated to the Naras who were a mixed stock of Tai and some Himalayan Mongoloids. The Naras who settled in northern Burma were much regarded for their proficiency in astronomy besides the Manipuris of the ancient kingdom of Manipur. As regards the knowledge of astronomy of the Naras there is no impossibility of having the impact of the Chinese astronomy too.

The Vedanga Jyotisha was gradually replaced by Pitamaha Siddhanta, Vasistha Siddhanta, Romaka Siddhanta, and Paulisa.

Siddhanta, and finally replaced by Surya Siddhanta from about the middle of the 6th century A.D., expounded or composed by Varahamihira who died in the year 587 A.D., with the knowledge of astronomy from the Graeco-Chaldeans.

The period of development of the Manipuri names of the nakshatras or lunar mansions which were called *thawamichaks*, is not known. If it were developed prior to the arrival of Surya Siddhanta in these areas the number of nakshatras should have been 28 nakshatras but the number of the Manipuri nakshatras so far collected from different manuscripts is found to be only 27 nakshatras and no corresponding name of *Abhijit* nakshatra is found. These findings prompt us to think that the Manipuri names of the lunar mansions are of post Surya Siddhanta development and the name of the mansion *Khongjom-nubi* corresponding to *Krttika* i.e. Pleiades is found to have been mentioned as early as the 9th century A.D. There is a myth called *Khongjom-nubi nong-garol* in manuscript, in which the stars of Pleiades were regarded as the girls of the Sakya tribe of Poiraiton which later known as the Luwangs. In the Greek mythology too the stars of the Pleiades were the seven daughters of Atlas and Pleione, who were placed by Zeus among the stars. The manuscript does not clearly indicate which of the *thawamichaks* is the first one of the lunar mansion but impliedly *Khongjom-nubi* is shown to be the first.

The following are the Manipuri names of the Lunar Mansions with the corresponding International along with junction stars given in bracket, Sanskrit and Chinese names.

1. *Sujik* ( $\beta$ ,  $\gamma$  Arietis, junction star  $\beta$  Arietis), Asvini, Lou.
2. *Thaba* (35, 39, 41 Arietis, junction star 41 Arietis), Bharani, Wei.
3. *Khongjom-nubi* (Pleiades, junction star  $\eta$  Tauri) Kṛttika, Mao.
4. *Apa-nga* ( $\alpha$ ,  $\theta$ ,  $\gamma$ ,  $\delta$ ,  $\epsilon$  Tauri, junction star  $\alpha$  Tauri), Rohini, Pi.
5. *Sachung Telheiba* ( $\lambda$ ,  $\theta_1$ ,  $\theta_2$  Orionis, junction star  $\lambda$  Orionis), Mrgasira, Tzu.

6. *Leekla Saphaba* ( $\alpha$  Orionis, junction star  $\alpha$  Orionis), Ardra, Ts'an.
7. *Chingjaroy* ( $\alpha, \beta$  Geminorum, junction star  $\beta$  Geminorum), Purnavasu, Ching.
8. *Chungsen-nupi* ( $\gamma, \delta, \theta$  Cancri, junction star  $\delta$  Cancri), Pusya, Kuei.
9. *Ningthou-naga* ( $\eta, \sigma, \delta, \epsilon, \rho, \zeta$  Hydræ, junction star  $\alpha$  Cancri), Ashlesha, Liu
10. *Ningthou-tuicn* ( $\alpha, \eta, \gamma, \zeta, \mu, \epsilon$  Leonis, junction star  $\alpha$  Leonis), Magha, Hsing
11. *Ningthou-shamu* ( $\delta, \theta$  Leonis, junction star  $\delta$  Leonis) Purva-phalguni, Chang
12. *Shamu-picha* ( $\beta, \theta$  Leonis, junction star  $\beta$  Leonis), Uttara-phalguni, I
13. *Uphong-ngatu* ( $\delta, \gamma, \epsilon, \beta$  Corvi, junction star  $\delta$  Corvi), Hasta, Chen.
14. *Mokang-Salka* ( $\alpha$  Virginis, junction star  $\alpha$  Virginis), Chitra, Chio
15. *Luwang-salka* ( $\alpha$  Bootis, junction star  $\alpha$  Bootis), Svati, K'ang
16. *Salka* ( $\alpha, \beta, \gamma$  Libræ, junction star  $\alpha$  Libræ), Visakha, Ti.
17. *Oxpuroy* ( $\beta, \delta, \mu$  Scorpii, junction star  $\delta$  Scorpii), Anuradha, Fang.
18. *Tahurong* ( $\beta, \nu, \gamma$  Scorpii, junction star  $\alpha$  Scorpii), Jyestha, Hsin.
19. *Tongchang-nupi* ( $\lambda, \nu$  Scorpii, junction star  $\lambda$  Scorpii), Mula, Wci
20. *Thayar* ( $\delta, \epsilon$  Sagittari, junction star  $\delta$  Sagittari), Purvasara, Chi
21. *Thaton* ( $\theta, \tau, \sigma, \gamma$  Sagittari, junction star  $\sigma$  Sagittari), Uttarasarā, Tou
22. *Ningthou-manu-mamou* ( $\alpha, \tau, \gamma$  Aquilæ, junction star  $\alpha$  Aquilæ), Sarvana, Nu
23. *Harei-maye* ( $\alpha, \beta, \delta, \gamma$  Delphini, junction star  $\beta$  Delphini), Dhanistha, Hsu.

24. *Korou-nu* ( $\lambda$  Aquarii and 100 adjacent stars, junction star  $\lambda$  Aquarii), Satabhisa, Wei.
25. *Khaba-lheng* ( $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$  Pegasi, junction star  $\alpha$  Pegasi), Purva-bhadrapad, Shih
26. *Silpa-leming* ( $\gamma$  Pegasi,  $\alpha$  Andromedæ, junction star Pegasi), Uttarabhadrapad, Pi
27. *Waya khuro* (32 stars of which the southernmost is  $\zeta$  Piscium, junction star  $\zeta$  Piscium) Revati, K'uei <sup>10</sup>

There are no corresponding Manipuri names of the 12 Zodiacal Signs and hence they were unknown to the early people of the ancient Manipur. It also strongly suggests that the Sikyas and Moriyas migrated before expounding the Signs of Zodiac in the Indian mainland. Since Dhaja Raja the Moriya arrived in the 3rd century A. D., it is almost certain that the concept of the Signs of Zodiac was

- 10 According to the account Tanyoiba Puya which is perhaps less dependable the names of the 1000 Mansions are follows: 1. Sajuk, 2. Thaba, 3. Thaton, 4. Thavai, 5. Ningthou hamu, 6. Shamu Apishak, 7. Ningthou turon, 8. Ningthou naga, 9. Linton kon, 10. Hui rei nai, 11. Khaba Leitang, 12. Luwang sankon, 13. Moinng rankon, 14. San Luwang Kok, 15. Khongjounubi, 16. Uko ngawai, 17. Chungjaioubi, 18. Chiu gseennaki, 19. Haeioma-nyong thang, 20. Mani mamou Shintaknaba, 21. Sachung Telhoiba, 22. Lurung tha sajlala Oksoy, 23. Taohung, 24. Long chalen, 25. Yaoja Khurong Mai, 26. Arai Leima Mukshan, 27. Umbren.

The time units used in astronomy are almost the same as that of the Indian system except the units of poong and danda, where 60 dandas make 1 day and are given as follows.

$$60 \text{ nahums} = 1 \text{ mikup}$$

$$60 \text{ mikups} = 1 \text{ poong}$$

$$64 \text{ poongs} = 1 \text{ day}$$

The unit of poong has now been transferred to the English hour unit 1 poong is to be equal to 1 hour. Formerly about 26 poongs are equal to 1 hour.

Apart from this time unit, there was another unit for each day and night which is called *yuthak* the same unit as the Sanskrit *jamardha*. Each day and night has 8 *yuthaks*. Hence on equinoctial days 1 *yuthak* is equal to 4 poongs and the rest of the days are in variations.

In astrology each *poong* was under the lordship of a spirit or god, and later the 64 number became a mystic number. Thus we get 64 *sarais*, 64 *phamdon-yangdons*, 64 *Lai nuras* etc.

not widespread in the Indian mainland by about the above period. The names of the Zodiacal Signs were developed in Babylon by Graeco-Chaldean astronomers. It is generally believed that the Greek astronomer Κλεοστρατος at about 532 B C introduced the nomenclature 'Zodiac' to describe the belt of stars about the ecliptic. The signs of the Zodiac were unknown to the early Indian scriptures like the Brahmanas. It appears that the Sakas who founded the Saka era brought with them this concept of Zodiacal Signs to India in the first century A D and subsequent Indian astronomers adopted from about the 2nd century A.D. or later. These historical accounts clearly suggest that the much acclaimed Parashar school of Indian astrology which based on the signs of Zodiac cannot at any rate exist earlier than the 2nd century A D against the claim of its existence several hundred years before Christ and before the Mahabharata war, or else at the most latter astronomers of the 3rd or 4th century A D or perhaps the post Varahamihira expounded the said astrology in the name of Parashar. In the 6th century A D the Indian astronomer Varahamihira suggested some corresponding Indian names of the 12 signs but they were not followed <sup>11</sup>

11 The following are the corresponding names ,

Babylonian names	Greek names	Varahamihira names	Indian names	International names
1. Ku or Iku	Krios	Kriya	Mesha	Aries
2. Te te	Taurus	Taburi	Vrsa	Taurus
3. Masmasu	Didumos	Jitums	Mithuna	Gemini
4. Nanganu	Karkinos	Kuluu	Karkata	Cancer
6. Aru	Leen	Leya	Simha	Leo
6. Ki	Parthenos	Pathona	Kanya	Virgo
7. Nuru	Zugos	Juka	Tula	Libra
8. Akrabu	Scorpios	Kaurpa	Vrehska	Scorpio
9. Pa	Tozontes	Tauksika	Dhanu	Sagittarius
10. Sabu	Ligoxeros	Akokera	Makara	Capricornus
11. Gu	Gdrezoos	Srodroga	Khumbha	Aquarius
12. Zib	Ichthues	Antyabha	Mina	Pisces



During the Vedanga Jyotisha period *Abhijit* was the 20th nakshatra starting from the *Krittika* as the first lunar mansion but with the emergence of Surya Siddhanta, *Abhijit* nakshatra had been dispensed with and the counting of lunar mansion started from *Asvini* as the first nakshatra. Now in a vague way *Abhijit* is marked a zero number in the Indian astronomy and sometimes totally omitted. It is very likely that it had been gradually discarded due to the adoption of Surya Siddhanta from about the 6th century A.D. The culture of astronomy was mainly concentrated in the ancient capital i.e. the Moriya city and most astronomers were from this city who dispersed in other parts of the territory at a latter period which is reflected even in the text of Cheitharol Kumbaba too. Most of the astronomers who developed a separate Luni-Solar calendar of Manipur in the middle of the 18th century A.D. as discussed in the section on Treatment on Kumbaba were people of Moriya city origins. The Moriyas there got mixed with the later arrivals like Kege and Senbi-Kabow, and the people of Moriya city origins were referred to as Kege and sometimes as Senbi-Kabow or simply Kabow by the Poireis.

Again in the Chinese astronomy there are also 28 lunar mansions like that of the Vedanga Jyotisha. The corresponding Chinese lunar mansion of *Abhijit* nakshatra is *Niu* and is the 9th lunar mansion of the Chinese astronomy marked by the stars  $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$ -Capricorn with the junction star  $\alpha$ -Lyræ and the first lunar mansion is called *Chio* corresponding the *Chitra* nakshatra i.e.  $\alpha$ -Virginis. Hence there is no image of the Chinese astronomy on the Manipuri astronomy due to obvious reasons rather there is the image of the Greek astronomy and myth through India. However in astrology the practice of determining the *pham*, for example *shamu-dapham-mi kakyen-da pham-mi* etc. meaning respectively 'sitting on elephant', 'sitting on kite' etc. occurring in a cyclic order in the life of a man, when a native happens to be on 'sitting on elephant' is ill, is said, it would be difficult for him to recover, and on the other hand if the native happens to be on 'sitting on kite' the native will collect wealth and so on, is determined on the age of the native which

is calculated in tropical years unlike the Indian system of ascertaining the *dasa* where the age of the native is calculated in *savan* years which is a duration of 360 days only and moreover the practice of *pham* is not found in the Parashar school of astrology. It therefore seems to be an origin of the east.

About the name of Moriya Phamballacha as found in Manipur accounts it is worthwhile to examine it more critically. We cannot rely solely on the spelling and punctuation of Manipur accounts. In some accounts Moriya is written as Mariya and Phamballacha as Phambalacha or Phambalcha. Taking the last spelling into account it is possible to split it as *Phumba* and *lacha*. Here *lacha* means raja and the real part of the name is Phamba. It appears Phamba like Omba is a word of the Moriyas, and if the former word is taken the name becomes Phambal Raja. In this name too the real part of the name is Phambal. In modern Manipuri Phambal means coronation and thus Phambal Raja means 'coronated king'. In some recently published booklets the name is punctuated as Moriyapham-Palcha which is not convincing and appears to be concoction with certain objectives.

## SAMLUNGFA

A group of Shans migrated from south China in the year 568 A.D. The Merteis used to call this group of Tai people Pong. They belonged to the branch of Tai called Mao Shan. In the half fabulous account of Tai-Ahom it is said that two brothers Khunlung (Hkun Long) and Khunlai (Hkun Lai) descended from the heaven in the year 568 A.D. and landed in the land of Mungrimungram (Mong Ri Mong Ram). They established a kingdom there. The name Mungrimungram was derived from their dialect meaning 'country-deserted-country-unhabited'. The meaning of Khunlung and Khunlai are 'prince elder' and 'prince younger' respectively.

According to their half fabulous account, Langdon the Supreme God decided his son Thengkham to descend on to the earth and establish a kingdom there. Thengkham was unwilling to go to earth and sent his two sons Khunlung and Khunlai. Langdon presented the two brothers an idol called Somdeo and some other aids for invoking gods for their aids according to the Ahom source. Khunlung was to be the king as he was the elder brother. Somdeo is much alike to the sound of Soma Deva the Indo-Aryan god. But, according to the Shan sources they had two idols called Sung and Sang. The first one is male god and the second one is his consort. The idol Somdeo of the Ahoms was as late as in the possession of Purandhar Singh who took refuge to Bengal in 1819 A.D. Later the idol was sold by the descendants of Purandhar Singh because of its sets of jewels in the time of financial hardship.

It is said that the idol Somdeo was kept in gold caskets, which contained a metal plaque measuring about 24 cm by 9 cm. The metal plaque was engraved by Chinese letters, 'Letters patent dated the fifth year of Yang Lo' corresponding to 1408 A.D. on the front; "By command of his imperial Majesty the President

of the Board compares both halves" on the back ; "Be faithful" on the left and "Let the receipt have effect. The Royal commission for conciliation Timasa" on the right.

The metal plaque was intended for the pedestal of Somdeo and also used to tie from the neck of the Ahom kings in time of their coronation.

In the mythology of the Shans there was one male god named Panthoi who was sent by Langdon the supreme God to ascertain the of the cause cries on the earth at the beginning of creation. He reported the cause to Him and he sent his son Aiphalan to break the guard from within it the cries came. Aiphalan opened the guard by his lightning discharge and brought out the men from inside. The name Panthoi is of the same name of the Meitei pantheon, A-Panthoi and Panthoi-bi

Khunlung and Khunlai built a town in Mungrimungram. Later the two brothers quarreled. Khunlai ousted his brother and took away the Somdeo and moved further west. He founded a new kingdom at a place which was given the Mungkhumungjao (Mong Kho Mong Jao) meaning 'country-great country-wide'. He was succeeded by his son Khunchu (Hkun Shu) while the other sons were given other territories. In this way the descendants of Khunlung and Khunlai maintained small principalities of their own.

Who was Samlungfa ? Sukhanpha (Hso Hkan Hpa) and Samlungfa (Hkun Sam Long later called Sam Long Hpa) were the two distinguished sons of Blakh Hkam Deng alias Imokhamneng (Ai Mo Hkam Neng). Four sons and a daughter of the Mong Mao king Sao Tai Pong from whose name the Meiteis used to call this particular branch of Tai Pong, are found to have been mentioned in Shan account of which Tailung, Pameoplung (Pa Meo Pong), Phuchakhang (according to Tai-Ahom chronicle) and Blakh Hkam Deng were sons ; and Nangmong Blakhkamseng was the daughter. In some accounts like that of N. Elias, Blakh Hkam Deng is shown as another prince descended from Hkun-su. According to Deodhai Assam Buranji, Phuchakhang also called Chao Changneyu

was the son-in-law of Sao Tai Pong. Phuchakhang married Nang-mong Blakhkamseng the daughter of Sao Tai Pong

Pameoplung succeeded Sao Tai Pong and became king of Mong Mao, and when he became old he was longing for a son for which he prayed to Yak-ka-so *nat* (spirit). The legend says, according to Hsen-Wi chronicle, Pameoplung suspected his younger queen Nang Nam Ap of co-habiting with a paramour and watched. One day they were caught red handed where the king found her with Yak-ka-so *nat* in her chamber and she was then expelled. She gave birth to Sukaupha (Sukampha according to Shan Chronicle found from Manipur) in her parents' home. In another version the queen went one day to take bath in the Nam Paw river where she met Blakh Hkam Deng and had secret relation with him and she became pregnant. She then put up with her father Thaokenling where she gave birth to Sukanpha and Samlagfa.

Pameoplung died in the year 1203 A.D. and the throne remained vacant for some time. According to N. Elias Pameoplung was succeeded by Blakh Hkam Deng and according to Tamuh Phukan's Burunji Blakh Hkam Deng was invited to assume the *Sawbua*-ship. Blakh Hkam Deng after reigning for ten years died in the year 1220 A.D. and was succeeded by Sukanpha 'the great'. It was Sukanpha the great who thought out for a Shan empire. Samlungfa had already become a *Sawbua* of Mogaung (Mungkhong) in 1215 A.D. under his father. He built a city on the bank of the Nam Kawng (Namkhong) river a western tributary of the Irrawaddy river. There is a Mao Shan tradition that Samlungfa found a sapphire drum on the bed of the Namkhong river and hence he gave the name of the city Mong Kawng meaning 'city-drum' where *Kawng* means drum. Mong Kawng is called Mogaung by the Burmese and Mungkhong by the Meiteis.

Sukanpha should not be confused with Sukapha the founder of the Ahom kingdom in Assam. Sukapha after wandering for some 13 years finally established the Ahom Kingdom in the year 1228 A.D. at Kamjang. Sukapha was one of the grandsons of Sao

Tai Pong born by his daughter Blakhamæng who got married to Phuchakhang as stated above. Sukapha was born when his parents were staying in his maternal grand-father's house. Sukapha (Hso Hka Hpa) was a name given by his maternal grand-father. Sukapha had one elder brother named Noishanpha (Noi San Hpa or Loi San Hpa). It was Noisanpha who became the *Sawbwa* of Mogaung when Samlungfa was engaged in the expedition of Arakan and Manipur. Noi San Hpa was appointed the *Sawbwa* of Mogaung by Sukanpha the great which probably brought a rupture between Samlungfa and his brother Sukanpha. Since then the *Sawbwa*-ship of Mogaung was in an unbroken succession in the hands of the descendants of Noi San Hpa till 1443 A.D. when a change occurred. The *Sawbwa*-ship of Mogaung passed on to Khekkhomba the noted Pong king in whose reign the boundary between the Pong and Meitei was demarcated in the year 1470 A.D. or 1475 A.D. Khekkhomba was the younger brother of the Mong Mao King Thongunba or Thonganba (Sao Ngan Hpa) who ascended the throne in the year 1415 A.D. and died a very unfortunate death in 1443 A.D. as fugitive in Ava or in Kale. The throne of Mong Mao remained vacant for some years and finally filled up by one Sao Lun Kon Hkam Hpa uncle of Thonganba in 1448 A.D. The date of ascension of the throne of Mogaung by Khekkhomba is likely to be in the year 1445 A.D.

In that expedition Samlungfa conquered Arakan, Basa and Poirei. The Pongs used to call the Poireis by the name Kahsse. It is stated in Choitharol Kumbaba that Samlungfa stayed for ten years at Pong Ingkhol meaning the homestead of the Pong. Pong Ingkhol is possibly somewhere at or near present Sagolmang. Samlungfa conquered Poirei when Naothingkhong was the king of Poirei sometime during the period 1220-25 A.D.

The conquest of Basa is not mentioned in the Shan chronicle but simply states, " ... and other countries". It shows that Basa was not a politically prominent place, perhaps a small settlement with no political power. However Basa is found to have

been mentioned in the Manipuri account which writes, "Samlung the younger brother of Sukanpha the king of Pong after conquering Pasa (Basa) came to the Meiteis and stayed for 10 years at Pong Inghkol. He left along the source of the Iuil river" The Shan source and the Manipuri source are in close conformity. The hills at the source of the Iril river has three watersheds, one flowing towards the Imphal Valley, the second to the Brahmaputra valley and the third towards the Nungthee (Chindwin) valley. It seems the first expedition of Samlungfa was towards Arakan and Manipur.

Samlungfa probably moved towards the Somra tract to the Chindwin valley from Imphal valley. He then moved to the Mali valley i.e. Putao in northern Burma. These areas were found to have been ruled by the Khamyangs who found their way to that country from Khao Khao Mao Lon in the Shan states of Burma. Khamyangs were an admixture of Khams and tribes of Tai origin. Samlungfa occupied the area and established the rule of Paklongs who accompanied him from Mogaung. Samlungfa then moved to present Upper Assam into the kingdom of Chutiyas, where the Chutiyas resisted him and soon led into a clash with heavy losses on the side of the Chutiyas. But in some accounts it is said that the Chutiya throne was vacant by that time following a quarrel over the succession of throne by the four surviving sons of Lekroy the last Chutiya king, namely Buroia, Masura, Kohla and Kosi Raja. Kosi Raja was caught alive while other brothers were either killed or fled away. Kosi Raja was spared and appointed a tributary chief under a governor whom Samlungfa placed on the Chutiya throne. Samlungfa then left the place. The last days of Samlungfa are found with contradictory versions but one Garo source states that he merged with the Chutiyas and assumed the name Raja-Diga and handed over Namrup and Tipa, to Sukapha in 1228 A.D. as his successor and left the country and died somewhere.

The route through which Samlungfa entered Poirei may be investigated as follows. Samlungfa moved towards the south-west

from Mogaung till he reached northern Arakan. After conquering northern Arakan he moved along the penepains of northern Arakan which is by now known as Arakan pass leading to Chittagong between the Chin hills and northern Arakan. Somewhere from the Arakan pass he moved towards the north all along some low hills to present Manipur. Before reaching present Manipur he came across the city of Basa inhabited by Bangals, proto-Bangals and Mayangs. During this period Mizoram was no man's land. Most of the inhabitants were fugitives or immigrants arriving in search of better habitable lands. The name Basa was given by the Bangals meaning a temporary shelter or habitation. The people living in Basa were called by themselves Pasi (Basi). The existence of Basa seems to be very short. The pinpoint location of Basa cannot be described due to want of materials but it is not far from Rangamati and possibly near present Lunglei (Lungleh). After conquering Basa Samlungfa came towards the source of the Khuga River and came to Imphal valley to the west of present Moirang. It should be noted that Moirang was non-existent by that period but the Keges appear to have concentrated near Ithai, and from where he came to Porei on the north eastern part of the Imphal valley near the source of the Kongba river.

In other accounts it is said that "for conquering Manipur the Mao Shan general (Samlungfa) probably advanced through the Lushai hills and Tripura from northern Arakan as pointed out by Robinson in his accounts of Assam (p. 160), reached the capital of Cachar and captured it and 'returning thence he descended into the valley of Manipur'.<sup>1</sup>

Robinson appears to have taken his source from Pemberton. So far available accounts are concerned Basa is found to have been mentioned only in two sources viz. Manipuri source and Tripura chronicle the Rajamala, but in the case of the latter it is mentioned in the form of fables. In his account Pemberton said, '..... of the Basa kings, which probably means Banga, the ancient capital of

1 Dr. Gogoi : Tai and the Tai kingdoms, page-158.



the Kachar country'. It seems from the traditional belief of the Meiteis that Basa was a city of the Mayangs, Pemberton drew his conclusion that Basa was in Cachar. By the time when Pemberton investigated, the application or connotation of the name Mayang had already been shifted to non-Mongoloid Indians though originally by the time of Samlungfa it was the name of a Tibeto-Burman tribe. More details are discussed in the section on Mayangs. The Bodos who became the Kacharis were originally called Mayangs, the Tripuris who were also of Bodo origin were called Mayang-Akoksha. The coming of the Kacharis in Cachar area cannot be expected earlier than the 15th century A.D. By the time of Pemberton the original Mayangs had lost their Mayang identity and Cachar began to be inhabited by the non-Mongoloid Indian who became known as Mayangs. He possibly with the comments of Meitei Pandits assumed that the erstwhile Basa was the capital of Cachar. In fact the kingdoms of Cachar and Tripura were yet to be born by the time of Samlungfa. Both the kingdoms gave birth to with fugitive Bodo princes from the north who had been pressed hard by the Ahoms centuries after the death of Samlungfa in the closing part of the 15th century A.D. or beginning of the 16th century A.D. even though they claim quite early. Pemberton's account is the only English source. Hence the deductions mentioned above are wrong.

While on his stay at Poirei, Samlungfa was deeply moved by the deplorable condition of the people of Poireis. Capt. Pemberton quoted, 'Samlungfa in consideration of the extreme poverty of the Maneepoor territory remitted all tributes, appeared to have directed the adoption of certain observances in dress and diet, directed to improve the habit and manner of the people who were evidently in the lowest stage of civilization'.<sup>2</sup>

The standard of civilization of Manipur so far found in that Shan chronicle is that of the Poirei principality of the northern

2. Pemberton, R. B.: Report on the Eastern Frontier of British India, page-144.

Imphal valley centering around the Kangla-tonghi plateau. The Shan accounts are silent about the Moriya principality of the southern Imphal valley centering around Ithai which was known as the Kege principality. It is certain that Samlungfa had not come across the Kege principality even though he came along the southern hills and possibly got down in the valley at about the Lamangdong area and moved northwards. The contemporary civilization of the Ithai principality of the Moriyas was comparatively high. They had modified the solar calendar about a century earlier than the invasion of Samlungfa. Silk industry was well advanced which was brought from China by the Kege. Gold ornaments made of gold particles collected from the beds of the auriferous tributary streams of the Ningthi (Chindwin) river were used. However politically they were weak. As time passed on the Poireis grew to a political power of the valley and petty principalities were brought under their hegemony and finally the Poirei became ruler of unified Manipur. In the present angle the Shan account now appears to be the whole of Manipur.

The impact of Samlungfa's conquest had a lasting effect. He was a conquerer as well as a benefactor to the people of Poirei. He was looked upon with fear and honour by the people.

The people of Poirei settled for more than four centuries on this valley when Samlungfa came. The above comments show that the people of Poirei were very backward by that time because of complete isolation from other parts of the world. The contact with Samlungfa is the first that the Poireis had political contact with the outside world since their migration to this valley. The people of Poirei consisted of several tribes, excepting few, all were very backward and excepting the affluent group of society, the remaining general people used very little amount of cloth, barely covering their private parts. Women were completely topless and the dress of common people were probably not happy by Samlungfa and perhaps forced them to wear more cloths like the affluent group despite their poverty. The women of the affluent group used stripped cloths covering probably from top to knee as *phunak*

while the poor general women used *lunga phanek* covering from waist to knee.

People were possibly chewing dry fish all the time which looked them dirty. Samlungfa abandoned it and introduced the chewing of betel nuts. Thus he brought about a change in diet and dress.

It appears from the above comments that the people of Poirai used much slang which was also abandoned by Samlungfa. People used to live in very untidy household and personal hygiene. Samlungfa possibly introduced certain code of living for removing the bad practices and soon brought them to a stream-lining.

All the actions of Samlungfa are clearly seen from the traditions and conventions used by the Meiteis of today. The Meiteis of to-day use some phrases, for example, *mi-Pong-uni*, *mi-Pong-taani*, and *mi-Po-ig-laakni* meaning 'Pong man may see', 'Pong man may hear' and 'Pong man may come' respectively. These phrases are uttered by the Meiteis for concealing any unbecoming behaviour in the manner of speech, or concealing anything which are socially not sanctioned, or displaying household articles disorderly. However as the time passed on, the phrases are equally applied for concealing the hatching of some secret plans. This is perhaps the result of strict discipline imposed on the people of Poirai by the Pong prince.

There had been good relations between the Pongs and Meiteis all through the history. The good relations are reflected in both the Pongs and Manipuri accounts. In the Manipuri chronicle Cheitharol Kumbaba it is mentioned that the Pong king Chao Pha Khekkhomba (Sao Kwom Hpa) and the Meitei king Kiyamba, while dining together drank water from the same vessel as a sign of love and affection. Khekkhomba was older than Kiyamba by 20 years, he was 47 years old on that date. It appears from their conversation that they were talking as if uncle and nephew. It is also stated in other accounts that Khekkhomba presented a golden image of Vishnu or Chakra to Kiyamba which the latter brought and

worshipped at Lamangdong. Since then Lamangdong became known as Vishnupur. In the Pong account it is mentioned that two Pong princes named Mongpo and Kyathon took asylum in the court of Pamheiba, who were sent by their mother widow queen. Pamheiba took great care of the two young princes. Later Pamheiba crushed the Burmese usurpers and installed the elder of the two princes to the throne of Mogaung. He also bestowed his daughter Yenjjoyai on that elder prince. This event is not recorded in the Manipuri account.

Who was Khekkhomba? Khekkhomba was the king of Mogaung who ruled in the middle of the 15th century A.D. He was called Chao-pha by the Shans meaning 'great king', where *Chao* means 'great' and *pha* (Hpa) means 'king'. The Manipuri style of Chao-pha is Chaoba and the Burmese style is Sawbwa. As stated earlier, Mogaung is the name given by the Burmese, the Meiteis called Mungkhong where as the Shans called it Mong Kawng. Mogaung is situated on the bank of the Namkhong river a western tributary of the Irrawaddy river and located at 97°E and 25°31' N.

In the year 1443 A.D. Thonganba also called Thonganba the king of Mong Mao a city located at about 98°E and 24°N, the original seat of the Mao Shans, was chased by the Chinese general Yangchaungsu. He fled to Ava for shelter where the Chinese general demanded him. According to one version, it is said that he committed suicide and the Chinese general got the dead body which he dried in the sun and carried to China. In another version the Burmese king handed over him to the Chinese general and he never returned. The widow of Thonganba fled to Khanti and then moved to Mogaung and settled there. The *Sawbwa*-ship of Mogaung was held by the descendants of Noisanpha (Noi San Hpa) the elder brother of Sukapha the founder of the Ahom kingdom in Assam, in unbroken succession since Noisanpha in the first half of the 13th century A.D. till 1443 or 1446 A.D. where a change occurred.

Accounts are conflicting about the succession of the *Sawbwa*-ship of Mogaung since 1443 or 1446 A.D. The Pong chronicles

found in the hand of the Meiteis as narrated by Cap. Pemberton are at poles apart from that of Ney Elias. As discussed in the earlier sections the dates of that Pong chronicles are also equally forged and it is therefore difficult to link up. The date of Thonganba is found antedated by over one century, and further added that the Swabwa-ship of Mogaung was passed on to the surviving sons of Thonganba, who fled with their mother. Pemberton identified Khekkhomba (written as Kingkhomba) as Sao Hoong Khum, which is doubtful. Cheitharol Kumbaba says Khekkhomba was 47 years old in the year in which Khekkhomba and Kiyamba the king of Manipur led a joint expedition against the Khambat Raja. Kiyamba was 27 years old and was on the throne for 3 years on that date. The date of accession of Kiyamba is 1467 A.D. according to the above chronicle and hence the date of expedition is 1470 A.D. The date may not be very accurate as it is earlier than 1485 A.D. the mile stone date in the chronology of the Meiteis as discussed in earlier sections. According to that Pong chronicles the date of expedition is 1475 A.D., a discrepancy of 5 years. As the dates of this account too are forged we are to take it to be sometimes around this date. Cheitharol Kumbaba further states that Khekkhomba was on the throne for 30 years on the date of expedition on Khambat. Relying on the above investigations the date of accession of Khekkhomba is likely at about 1446 A.D. In the above stated Pong chronicles the date of defeat or death of Thonganba is given as 1332 A.D. and the confirmed date is 1443 A.D. according to the latest Burmese account. The inscriptions of Tupayon Pagoda erected by Narapati at Sagaing describe the fleeing of Thonganba to Mohmyin and Kale, and capture of him by the Burmese and presentation to the king on his day of coronation which took place in the year 1443 A.D. It is therefore seen that the date of that Pong chronicle is antedated exactly by 110 years. Again Khekkhomba is said to have died at about 1512-13 A.D. and was succeeded by his son Sao Peng (Chao-peng) in whose reign the Burmese first attacked and conquered Pongs. According to N. Elias, Sao Peng ascended the throne in

the year 1526 A. D. and died in 1556 A. D., he was defeated by the Burmese king named Hanthawadi whose seat was at Pegu. The immediate predecessor of Chao Peng is given as Sao Hui Hpa also called Samhungpawmaring. Both accounts agree the defeat of Chao Peng in the hands of the Burmese. In that Pong account as narrated by Cap Pomberton Khekkhomba is shown as one of the great grandsons of Thonganba, and as stated earlier the Sawbwaship of Mogaung passed on to the surviving sons of Thonganba. The eldest of the surviving sons ruled for 3 years, the second for 28 years and so on. But according to N. Elias it was Saoshiba (Sao Kwom Hpa) the younger brother of Thonganba, who became the *Saulua* of Mogaung establishing a new line of *Sawbwa*-ship and reigned for 50 long year from about 1445 A. D. As stated above Khekkhomba was 30 years on the throne in the year about 1475. According to N. Elias Sao Kwom Hpa was succeeded by Sao Ka Hpa in 1496 A. D. Before his death Sao Ka Hpa distributed his kingdom of Mogaung country to his sons and ministers. The state of Mogaung itself was given to his minister Sao Sui Hpa in the year 1520 A. D. Sao Sui Hpa was succeeded in the year 1526 A. D. by one Chao Peng in whose reign the Burmese invaded Mogaung in the year 1556 A. D. Both the accounts agree the invasion of Mogaung during the reign of Chao Peng. The identification of Chao Peng as the son of Khekkhomba is not acceptable, for Khekkhomba was 47 years old in 1470 A. D., the defeat of Chao Peng (also written as Sao Peng ba) in the year 1556 or 1568 A. D. which was the 30th year of his reign and hence Chao Peng may be supposed to be at least 50 years of age on that date. It is therefore seen that the father is older than his son by about one century which is approaching towards absurdity.

It is certain that the event of the joint expedition of Khekkhomba and Kiyamba against the Khambat (Khampat) Raja took place sometime before 1485 A. D. a milestone on the chronology of the Meiteis. The cause of the expedition will be discussed in later section. It is also seen from the above investigations that Khekkhomba of Manipur source is Sao Kwom Hpa (Sao Kwon

Hpa) of the Burmese or the Shan source. So we conclude that Khekkhomba was the younger brother Thongamba or Thonganba the unfortunate Mao King who ascended the throne in the year 1415 A.D. and killed in the year 1443 A.D. It is said that Thonganba subjugated a number of Shan states with the assistance of his two younger brothers namely Sao Kwon Hpa (Khekkhomba) and Sao Hung Hpa. After fleeing from Mong Mao in the 1443 A.D. or somewhat later Khekkhomba established himself the *Sawbwa* of Mogaung by superseding the earlier line of *Swabwa*-ship.

We may investigate what were the reasons for this love and affection. We may subscribe the following at the most. The Pongs did not say the Meiteis were Tais. They took them to be some other tribes and gave the name Kahsse or Cassay. Actually the Meiteis were a mixed stock of Mongoloid sub-races. The ruling groups were Himalayan or neo-Tibetan tribes and the rest were mainly Tibeto-Burman and Tai. It can be seen from the population hypothesis that the projected population of the Poireis was of the order of about 757 souls in 1206 A.D. By increasing the population some 200% on the projected figures for possible errors the population of the Poireis was of the order of two to three thousand souls. Generally in early society the number of females were usually much higher than that of the males. After eliminating women, children, old and invalids the fighting combatant was order of 500 men at the most on the above mentioned date. So we may say that when Samlungfa invaded Poirei, it had a fighting force of about 500 men. It is not known what was the size of the army of Samlungfa. We cannot expect it to be very high, as high as thousands. In most of the clashes by that period the fighting forces were very low. From early to mediaeval history of the Indian sub-continent and eastern regions the figures of casualties or the size of the army claimed to have been recorded are all exaggerated figures without an exception. In the Mahabharata epic the figure of the Kaurava army was so high, perhaps it exceeded by several times the entire human population on this planet of that period. Yet we are to believe it on sentimental grounds.

Taking into accounts of the power of Shan princes and their political configurations we can at the most expect the strength of army of Samlungfa to be of about 500 men or less but better equipped with elephants and horses, and at the same time better organised. The strength of Poirei could not be higher than that of Samlungfa and even then ill equipped due to poverty, and less organised. It appears there was no resistance from the Poireis because of the superiority of equipment of the Pong forces and they accepted suzerainty. It is a natural course of history that several children are born by the conquering force with mothers of the defeated tribe. Not to speak of these remote days, even in the second world war the American soldiers as occupation force left over two hundred thousand children born by the Japanese mothers. It is said in Manipur account that the Pongs settled for 10 years which appears to be an exaggeration, but believed they stayed for some 2 or 3 years at the most. By about their departure they must have left several children and their dear ones. As time passed on, this must have become legends among the Pongs and must have felt the Meiteis were their relatives. In a likewise manner the Meiteis took the Pongs as their relatives as suggested by the literary accounts.



## CHINGUREMBI

In Manipur there is a manuscript named or entitled 'Chinguresmbi Kibanghap' meaning the 'co-travellers of Chinguresmbi'. The manuscript is written in old Manipuri or Meiteis. In that text one Mayang princess named Chingurembi was given in marriage to prince Meethingkhong of the Peisais. The literal meaning of the name Chinguresmbi as given by the Mayangs is perhaps 'graceful as the goddess'. She was also called Mayang Leima meaning Mayang princess. The source does not mention the principality or the kingdom to which the princess belonged. It also does not mention the name of her father. In the marriage the king sent his daughter Chinguresmbi with all decorums befitting a great Hindu princess of the mediæval period to the house of his son-in-law. Chinguresmbi was sent with several attendants of different trades and services. Names of the 10 attendants as found in the text are given below.

1. One person named Lakhi Naral, a personal attendant.
2. One person named Ram Naral, as household decorator.
3. One person named Lokhon Tas (Das), a carrier of *Howdah*.
4. One person named Tului Ram (1), an elephant driver, *Mahood*.
5. One person named Tului Ram (2), a dyer and garment maker.
6. One person named Hari, a gold-smith.
7. One person named Hari Natan, a groom.
8. One person named Tapa, a keeper of hearth.
9. One person named Angkhul Tao, a cowherd.
10. One person named Kathou, a fisherman.

It is clearly seen from the names of the above mentioned attendants that most of them were Hindus excepting the last two ~~names whose identities are not known~~. They seem to be Tibeto-Burman like Mayang and Mangang or Chakpas. Of the Hindu

names, the one appearing in serial No. 3 Lokhon Das is a typical Bengali name.

The above account also clearly indicates that Chingurembi was a Hindu princess. She was not a daughter of a mere chieftain. The family of her father must have belonged to some great Hindu kings.

So long we have been deceiving by the forged datings of the Oheitharol Kumbaba. Though Naothingkhong actually reigned in the first half of the 13th century A.D., the said chronicle enters the date as 663 A.D. by antedating some 600 years. Now we understand the period of Chingurembi is the first half of the 13th century A.D. being the queen of Naothingkhong and we will be able to find the principality to which Chingurembi belonged.

Most of the Bangals who became Meiteis when the Meitei setup came into existence, were either put into a *Sagei* that had already existed or given a separate *sagei* or family title. It is seen, as records reveal that the family titles like Hakwanthem, Tingkuram etc. were given to them. These family titles are by now obsolete, possibly they were merged into other *sageis*. Even when *sageis* were allotted names were found to have been written along with the tribe e.g. Khumbongmayum Kabow, Thingbaijam Bangal, Khagokpam Bangal, Hakwanthem Bangal, Thingkuram Bangal, Chanambam Mayang, Keisam Mayang etc. unlike present way of writing. In this way of writing the real name is not found and it only reveals the *sagei* to which the tribe belonged. In the modern way of writing, say, Keisam Tomba we find the second part of the name is forename of the person. Thus in Keisam Tomba the real name of the person is Tomba. But in the earlier name Keisam Mayang the second part of the name is the name of the tribe to which the person belonged and the tribe which got merged in the *sagei* Keisam. The method of writing names in the former way is found to have been current from about the 16th century A.D. and prior to this date we do not have records.

It has been mentioned in the section on Mayang that the title Mayang Leima was given to either of the following categories :

any girl belonging to any tribe when got married to a Mayang prince ; any princess belonging to those tribes who were put under the general term Mayang which included Mayang proper, Thongnang-Mayang, Kacharis, Koch, Bangals and proto-Bangals.

According to the text, Chingurembi is found to have been given the title Mayang Leima which indicates she was a Mayang princess. Names with the suffix '-rembi' for females are very common for the Mayang and their cognate tribes. We find names like Lai-khurembi, Taikhurembi, Sanarembi, Chibarembi, Langmeirembi, Koirembi, Chingurembi etc. The neo-Tibetan tribes or the Himalayan tribes do not generally use this suffix. However some of them also use this type of suffix and we find Leimaren, Thongaren, Lairouren, Sararen etc. The present Meiteilon accomodates all of them. It may be noted that the word Sanarembi has two parts, first part is probably an Indo-Aryan origin and the second part is a Mayang suffix. Some of the above names have some basic mystic meanings. The word *Chingu* means god. So the name Chingurembi is equivalent to the meaning 'supreme goddess' or 'as graceful as goddess'. Such names are generally not given to any person except as titular names. Thus Chingurembi appears to be an honorific name. She must have another name. Many queens are found to have been given posthumously honorific names e.g. the name *Imoinu Ahongbi* was given to the wife of Khuiyoy Tompok who belonged to a Langmai girl. She was earlier known as Langmainu Ahongbi. Thus we conclude, Chingurembi was not known by the name when she was married to prince Naothingkhong. It is revealed that prince Naothingkhong had several wives but none of the names so far found in the accounts like Sagei Salairol indicate a possible name which could match such a great princess. So we are to analyse her identity by the antecedents as found in the text Chingurembi Khonglup. Relying on the text it is fairly certain that Chingurembi was a Bengal princess whose principality was at Lamangdong at the time of marriage which the Poireis took as Mayang principality and she was a daughter of a

Sena prince of the Senas of Bangal. It may be noted that the Bangals were not categorised as Mayangs but the people of Palsai took Basa a Mayang city and that the inhabitants of the Lamangdong principality were from Basa. She was a princess of Basa who moved to Lamangdong. This is perhaps the reason why she was given the title 'Mayang Leima'.

## THE RACIAL AND POLITICAL HISTORY

It is not known whether there were earlier inhabitants or not in the valley now called Kabow valley before the arrival of the Sakyas and Moriyas. It seems the area was a virgin land, and therefore the earliest known inhabitants of this area are the Sakyas and Moriyas. Most of the Moriyas and a sizeable bulk of the Sakyas besides their mixed clans or tribes, constituted one of the basic components of the Meitei or Manipuri.

The earliest settlers of the Imphal valley were not known by the name Meitei which will be discussed in the section on the appellation Meitei. They were known by the names of their respective tribes to which they belonged. The earliest settlers were Tibeto-Burmans followed by neo-Burmese and neo-Tibetan. These groups of people concentrated mainly on the north-eastern corner of Imphal valley. Then another group of Austro-Asiatic tribes entered the valley and settled in the eastern part, while another stream of this group of people entered the present political Manipur and settled on the western side of it. Some groups of the Himalayan tribe Moriya, the Tibeto-Burman, the neo-Burmese, people of the Chinese and Indian origins settled in the southern part of the valley. In fact Imphal valley was a sanctuary of the fugitives from the surrounding areas because of its natural girdle with hills and mountains which protected them from external aggression.

When all these groups of people fused together a community called Meitei came into existence. The following are the main elements which constituted either partly or wholly the Meiteis. It may be noted that some groups of Tibeto-Burmans may also be called neo-Burmese and vice-versa, and hence a provisional classification of the different tribes or races which constituted the Meitei or Manipuri is given below.

- Himalayan, or  
neo-Tibetan origin (1) Chakkha (Sakya), (2) Muwa or Moriya (Maurya), (3) Nga (Anga), besides their mixed clans or tribes like (i) Lei-Nung, (ii) Lei-Hou, (iii) Khu-Nung, (iv) Khu-Man, and (v) Kham-Nung, of which Lei, Hou, Khu are the Himalayan tribes. Man are of Mon origin, Nung are of Tai origin and Kham are the Tibetan Khamba (Khampa) etc.
- Tibeto-Burman  
of Asiatic origin (1) Kangba, (2) Kongba, (3) Kouba, (4) Langmai, (5) Kabui, (6) Kabow, etc.
- Tibeto-Burman  
of Tai origin (1) Nongbal, (2) Nongmai, (3) Nongyai, etc.
- Tibeto-Burman  
of Bodo origin (1) Mangang, (2) Mayang, (3) Monang (Mahui), etc.
- Tibeto-Burman  
of Mon origin (1) Man of Khu-Man, (2) Maren, (3) Maling (5) Maram, etc.
- Neo-Burmese,  
or mixed origin (1) Chenglei, (2) Haokap (3) 'hingsaug, (4) Khunpham, (5) Ngangcheng, (6) Kharoi, (7) Ngangoi, (8) Hangoi (9) Chothe, (10) Kom, (11) Khuyon, (12) Moyon, (13) Kharam, (14) Koireng, etc.
- Austro-Asiatic  
origin (1) Funan, (2) Mon-Khmer (Khamarian) etc.
- Chinese origin (1) Kege, (2) Chin, etc.
- Tai and Asiatic-  
Tai origin (1) Heirong, (2) Heirem, (3) Khunjan, (4) Shelley of Shelloy-Langmai, (5) Senbi of Senbi-Kabow, (6) Tai Mao, (7) Lai, (8) Pong or Mau (Mao) Shan, (9) Loi—their mixed or associated tribe Chakpa namely (i) Leimaram, (ii) Andro, (iii) Phayeng, (iv) Kontruk, (v) Khurkhun, (vi) Sekmai, (vii) Chairen etc.

Indian origin : (1) proto-Bangal, (2) Bangal.

Indo-Aryan origin : (1) Indian Brahmins.

Indo-Afghan origin : (1) Muhamadans.

Besides the above mentioned tribes and races, several individuals or families belonging to different ethnic communities also migrated and were later absorbed in the general population, for example, King tribe whose ancestral home was in Teru the ancient state of the Karens, is also found to have been mentioned in historical novels of the Moirang Kangleirol. A man belonging to the King tribe known by the name Kayen-shu-chā Athouba meaning 'Kayen-suh-cha the brave' is found to have been mentioned in those historical novels. The Burmese and Tai pronounced it Khyen-shu. It is said that Khyen-shu (or Hsu) is the modern name of the King tribe. Similarly we find two names Khoidom and Māndom belonging to some unmentioned tribes. They were later absorbed in the Luwang and Nongbal (later called Angom) clans of the Meitei setup. Different literary accounts describe them in an allegorical way. However in Sagei Salairiol published by the State Kala Akademi, both of them are shown as the adopted sons of Luwang Punshiba, which is doubtful. The mother of the two is shown to be a lady named Liklabi-cha Tongdanna which indicates that she belonged to a Mangang. The mother and both the sons seem to be some prominent persons.

Thus the Meitei or Manipuri community is racially a mixed stock of Sakya, Maurya, Sino-Tibetan and Austro-Asiatic speaking Mongoloids, Indo-Aryan speaking non-Aryans, with tints of Indo-Aryan and Indo-Afghan.

The ancient kingdom which is now known as Manipur had two political nuclei, the first nucleus was the valley now known as Kabow valley and the Upper Iril valley in the Imphal plateau at a later period.

The first kingdom in the valley now known as the Kabow valley was established by Abhi Raja the Sakya king who probably

came from Kapilavastu through the Arakan pass in the second century B.C. (923 B.C. according to the Burmese chronicle). After sometime he moved to Tagaung. It is not clearly known whether Abhi Raja belonged to the Moriya clan of the Sakya or not. It is said that 'Moriya is the classic name of the Kabow valley' and the first seat of the Sakya king was in Kabow valley. According to Col. Burney, Moriya preceded Tagaung as the seat of Sakya kings. When Abhi Raja died, his first son moved down the Irrawaddy river upto the Chindwin river and founded a kingdom at Kale. Since then princes belonging to the Sakya lines of rulers ruled the south of Moriya. In later period Moriya rulers were known as Moriya Lacha (Raja). "Moriya still appears in the titles of the chiefs of Kale and Song-sop (Thangthut or Samjok) on the upper Chindwin".

The second Sakya king to come over to Moriya (Kabow valley) was Dhaja Raja in the 3rd century A.D. However he did not stay at Moriya for a long time but moved to Tagaung leaving behind the Moriya to continue their former lines of rulers. Hence Abhi Raja was the first King of Manipur and Dhaja Raja another prominent king also ruled for some time. Poiraiton the founder of the second nucleus is a descendant of Abhi Raja or of Dhaja Raja, but it is more likely that he is a descendant of Abhi Raja.

Very little is known of the political history of Moriya city since its inception except some references in the Indian mythology and Burmese traditions till it disintegrated at about the 11th or 12th century A.D. In the first half of the 12th century A.D. there were usurpers who seized thrones from the rightful heirs in northern Arakan and adjoining areas. These political affairs were recorded during the later days of the Pagan monarch Kyanzittha. It is said that Kyanzittha had one daughter named Swenthi got married to the grandson of Anawrahtha the Pagan king and had one grandson named Alaungzithu born by his daughter Swenthi, who succeeded his maternal grandfather by usurping



his maternal uncle Yajakumar ( Rajkumar ) born by Thambula<sup>1</sup> ( Thambal in Manipuri style ) the wife of Kyanzittha. The usurpers of northern Arakan were crushed by Alaungsihu who ascended the throne in the year 1112 A.D. At the same time the Mau Shans were expanding their territory, the movements of Cambodian tribes as a result of strife in the Khmers, natural calamities like cholera epidemic and Anawrahtha's invasion of Thaton in 1057 A.D. were in progress. Under these circumstances, it is thought that the Moriya rulers of that period, probably Moriya Phamballacha (Moriya Phambal Raja ) shifted his capital towards the northwest in the eastern part of the Khuga valley in the Imphal plateau under the pressure of cross human movement. The name of this Moriya king is found in the Manipuri accounts. His subjects were known to the Poireis as Kege because the subjects were mostly Kegees. The Moriya principality of Moriya Phamballacha also known as the Kege principality to the Poireis preserved the culture and civilization of the ancient kingdom of Manipur. Politically they were the overlords of the entire upper Chindwin valley before they were reduced by the Poireis in the second half of 13th century A D.

The Kegees flourished for more than a century under the Moriya rulers till they were reduced by Khongtekcha the Poirei king at about c. 1260 A D. The Moriya king who got defeated was Oinu-Seng-ba-la-cha (Oinu Seng Raja). The principality again flourished under the Lai rulers of Moirang. Even the areas lying to the south of the Loktak lake to Kabow valley were under the sway of the Moriya kings. It appears the Moriya kings took refuge in the hill areas lying between the two valleys namely Kabow valley and Imphal valley at times of misfortunes

The inundation of a tribe known as Senbi-Kabow started into Kabow valley as peaceful settlers from about the 13th century A.D. or somewhat earlier. These Senbi-Kabows were an admixture of Tai and Tibeto-Burman. From about the 15th century A.D.

1. W. S. Desai : A pageant of Burmese History, page-20.

the Mau Shans became active on the northern part of the upper Chindwin valley, who were called Tai Pong by the Meiteis. The Senbi-Kabow had good relations with the Kege-Moirangs. In early period it appears they accepted the suzerainty of the Kege-Moirang, but later they broke away and became a confederating petty principality. Their suzerainty is clearly reflected in the famous historical novel the Moirang Thoibi. In the novel, Thoibi the only daughter of the royal family of Moirang was sent to Senbi-Kabow principality by her enraged father the crowned prince for disobeying him in a marriage settlement in which the crowned prince wanted her to get married to Kongyangba a Nongbal tribe.

The capital of Senbi-Kabow as mentioned in the said novel was at Tumu (Tamu) in the northern part of Kabow-valley. The Senbi-Kabow chief was given the title Lakpa. Hence the Senbi-Kabow chief was called Tumu-Lakpa in that novel, meaning 'Controller of Tumu'. The Tumu-Lakpa had one daughter named Sanarik Changningkhombi of about the same age of Princess Thoibi. The title Lakpa is generally given to subordinate officers, and more over a gem princess was sent to the Tumu-Lakpa to be looked after well. This can only be done if the Senbi-Kabow was a subordinate officer of the Kege-Moirang. The novel further reveals that princess Thoibi used to associate with Sanarik Changningkhombi as her fellow mate but certain jealousy crept into the mind of Sanarik Changningkhombi which in turn brought about a disagreement. When the matter came to the knowledge of the Tumu-Lakpa, he rebuked his daughter and asked her to behave rather as an attendant of the princess. The period of development of the said novel is sometime in the first part of the 15th century A.D.

To the Mau Shans and Burmese the area from Samjok (Thangdut) in the north, Kale in the south and west of the Loijereee hills extending beyond present southern boundary of Manipur was the land of Kahasse or Cassey and Katha respectively. These two names were the names of Manipur in their respective dialects.

The inhabitants of the ancient political nuclei were mainly neo-Burmese. They were elements of Sakyas, Austro-Asiatic races and other Tibeto-Burmans, and later Tai people of Chinese origin.

The second political nucleus on the upper Irii Valley in the Imphal plateau came into existence from about 800 A.D. The inhabitants of this area migrated from far-away places. The earliest tribe who inhabited this area migrated from southern China and finally arrived in the latter part of the eight century A.D. and the neo-Burmese and Tibeto-Burmese migrated from northern Hukong Valley or Putao.

The second Sakya king who came to Burma was Dhaja Raja in the 3rd century A.D. (523 B.C. according to the Burmese chronicle). He settled first at Moriya the Moriyian Kingdom. After staying for sometime he then moved to Tagaung at a time when the earlier ruler Binnaka Raja was ousted by the Tayoks (Yunnanese) in 241 A.D. and died as fugitive king somewhere at Male. Dhaja Raja re-established the shattered Sakiyan Kingdom and married Naga Seng the widow queen of Binnaka Raja. The major tribes to which Dhaja Raja ruled were Tho and Do. Both these tribes were of Tai origin but mixed with the Sakiyans. When Dhaja Raja became king he was known as Thado Raja. All his successors bore the title Thado. More details are discussed in the section on Haokap, Chingshang, Khunpham and Ngangheng. Some of the descendants of Abhi Raja or Dhaja Raja became the rulers of the Tho and probably moved towards the north and established petty kingdoms in Putao area and north of it whose capital was at Kangla. The Manipuri account, Poireiton Khunthok refers to a king named Tho-Nga-Ren who ruled at Sawa Kangla, who sent his younger brother Poireiton to this land of *Tai-pang* as colonist. Poireiton entered the Imphal plateau and established his colony on the south of Kanglatongbi. King Thongaren is described as the 'ancient Chakkha'. As discussed earlier Chakkha may also be pronounced as Sakya in the Indian style. Thus there is every reason to say that Thongaren was one of the descendants of the Sakiyan rulers. It appears Dhaja Raja did not belong to the

Moriya clan of the Sakya tribe. Hence the founder of the second nucleus, prince Poireiton was a Sakya tribe, a descendant of the founder of the ancient kingdom of Manipur.

The Chakkha or Sakya tribe belonged to a Himalayan Mongoloid tribe or a neo-Tibetan tribe. Some Indian scholars take the Sakyas as Aryans. Poireiton's horde consisted of neo-Tibetans, Tibeto-Burmans, and neo-Burmese. The neo-Tibetan tribes consisted of different sub-tribes namely Kham-Nung, Lei-Nung, Khu-Nung besides the different sub-clans of the Chakkkhas like Ya-kkha, Yu-chakkha. It also had some other neo-Tibetan tribes like Lei-hou and Ma-hou.

The political power of the second nucleus from the direct successors was gradually passed on to Lei-nung group ruled by remote descendants of Poireiton, and in course of time it grew more and more powerful. The tribes like Funan, Maring, Bangal, proto-Bangal etc. came under their hegemony. The Kege-Moirangs were also frequently subdued. In due course all the inhabitants of the Imphal plateau were forged into one miniature nation under the name Meitei. When the name gave its birth in 12th century A.D. and came into common use the Poireis were known as Poirei-Meitei. Most of the tribes inhabiting the land of the Meiteis were prefixed or suffixed the name Meitei whenever referred to the non-Meitei tribes. Thus the Senbi-Kabow or simply Kabow inhabiting the Kabow Valley and its surrounding areas were known as Meitei-Kabow. This has also been observed by Francis Buchanan in his investigations that 'Tai Long or the great Tai were called Maitay Kabow (Kubo) by the people of Cassay (Manipur)'.

By about the 14th century A.D. the Indians in the Indian mainland came to know the Imphal plateau as Manipur possibly from the Mahabharata epic. More details are discussed in the section on Naming the land Manipur.

In 1470 A.D. according to Cheitharol Kumbaba, a conference was held somewhere on the eastern bank of the Chindwin river

between the kingdom of Pong and of Meitei for the demarcation of the boundaries between the two kingdoms. The Pong was represented by the Pong king or the Chao Hpa named Khekkhomba (Hke Hkom Hpa) and the Meitei was represented by king Kiyamba. The relation between Khekkhomba and Kiyamba was very cordial, just the relation between a grandfather and a grandson drinking water from the same pot. It may be noted that the earlier name of Kiyamba was Thangwai Ningthouba. He raided Kiyang-Khambat and subdued its chief named Chao Seng and he was offered one princess named Sana Langmeiremhi and another girl the daughter of Haoroksu. Since then he was known as Kiyamba. It is stated that the boundary of the kingdom of Pong began from the north-east of Samjouk. In the boundary demarcation between Khekkhomba and Kiyamba, it is mentioned that, the eastern limit of the kingdom of Manipur was the whole of the Loijeerec hills running between the Mu river and the Chindwin (Ningthi) river, to the north the eastward line from Samjouk to the Loijeerec hill through the areas where the dwarf variety of mango trees were grown; to the south to Mceyatong where also the dwarf variety of mango trees were grown.

The cause of the joint expedition against the Khambat Raja is given as follows. Two princesses of Khekkhomba were given in marriage one to each of the chiefs of Samjouk (Thangdout) and of Khambat who were tributary chiefs of Khekkhomba. When the two princesses reached Samjouk the one who had to proceed upto Khambat did not like the separation and requested their father to review the negotiation. The king agreed and she was allowed to stay at Samjouk. At this the Raja of Khambat felt offended and demanded the dowry supposed to have been given to that princess. Khekkhomba conceded the request and instead of the dowry the tributes for three years were remitted. In the meantime Khekkhomba sent his noble named Chao Lang Hie to request Kiyamba for a princess. Kiyamba agreed and sent one princess along with the Pong noble. The princess seems to be a younger sister of Kiyamba since he is too young to have a daughter of

marriageable age. When the party of the princess moved to Mogaung they were ambushed by the Khambat Raja. The princess was carried away, however the Pong noble escaped and narrated the disaster to Khekkhomba. To retaliate the gross insult a joint expedition was organised and assaulted Khambat in which the Khambat Raja escaped riding a spotted elephant. Since then Khambat was annexed to the kingdom of Kiyamba.

It is said in the Burmese account Byinnuang in 1569 A.D. subdued the Shan princes and the Raja of Manipur, who all accepted his suzerainty. This is not found in Manipuri account. The date under consideration is the period of Mungyamba whose activities in relation with Burma as found in the Manipuri account Ningthourol Lambuba are given below. The earlier name of Mungyamba was Thangwai Ningthou Kiyamba. He subdued the chief of MungYang to revenge the insult to one of his nobles named Chakpa Tete. Since then he was known as MungYang Ngamba meaning 'Victor of MungYang' and in shortened form Mungyamba, and the date is not mentioned. In 1562 A.D. Mungyamba raided Sagaung in which he lost 7 men. However, he captured Chao Hpa Mangtra and Chao Hpa Womsingnaba along with guns and other booties, and the boundary between Khamaran (the people Ava and Sagaung) and the Meitei was demarcated. The boundary line between these two kingdoms was the hill range lying to the west of the Mu river known as the Noijeeree (Loijiri) Hills. In 1568 A.D. he subdued the Chakpa Pung Pun and Chakpa Chirang respectively who were inhabitants of Chakpa Ango Ching. In 1569 A. D. several elephants were presented to the Poirai king by the Kabow chief as *Kwagok Haamba* for the princess Langmeirembi. In the following year Kabow Leima Langmeirembi was given in marriage to the Kabow chief. The name of the Kabow chief is not mentioned in the text, but seems to be a Moriyān descent.

There are accounts in which the people of Imphal valley using the brine springs found on the foot-hills of the Noijeeree hills to the south-east of Samjouk. There were several streams flowing from the Loijeeree hills to the Ningthi (Chundwin) river.

The Meiteis used to collect gold from the gold particles present on the bed of these streams. The Meiteis called the salt from the above source *Kabow-thum*.

No doubt very frequently chroniclers do not record their disgrace and defeat. But by this period under consideration the political condition of Burma is too weak to invade Manipur. There is no impossibility of the 'Raja of Manipur' mentioned in the Burmese chronicle being one of the Kabow chiefs of lower Chindwin which was also called Kathé Shan by the Burmese. It is quite evident from all historical accounts that from about the second half of the 15th century A.D. the Kingdom of Manipur took out and out an aggressive role till it reached its climax in 1749 A.D. when Ava was on the seize. Pamheiba (Garib Niwaz) not only consolidated the ancient territory of the kingdom of Manipur but also made the neighbouring kingdoms feel his power and prowess. He exercised his sway as far as the Hill Chittagong and northern Arakan to the south, and parts of Cachar and Nagaland to the north and north-west. The Mu Valley lying upto the Irrawaddy river was virtually under his control.

The causes of these raids were mainly due to infiltration of Burmese tribes and establishing their authority into the territory of the kingdom of Manipur. The Burmese subdued several villages on the Chindwin valley, the city of Samjouk the northernmost city in the territory of Manipur and established the Burmese authority there. It appears, Garib Niwaz was also not happy on receiving the information that his step sister Chakpa Makhao-ngambi who was married to Taninganwe the Burmese king, was reduced to a common wife from Chief Queen-ship. It may be mentioned that the Burmese king requested Charairongba for the hand of princess Chakpa Makhao-ngambi on the ground of matrimonial alliance, but the secret motive of the proposal is believed to exploit the strength of Manipur in subduing the Mons whom the Burmese called Talajings and thereby reducing the strength of Manipur. Accordingly just after the marriage the Burmese king requested the king of Manipur for help in crushing the Mons, but king Charairongba could not

comply with the request due to internal uprisings. He had to subdue several revolting tribes. After subduing the revolting tribes, on his way back he was struck by a lightning discharge and died. It may be noted that some accounts charged Garib Niwaz for causing the death of his father Charairongba. In the marriage negotiation the Burmese agreed to return all the villages in the Chindwin valley occupied by them and to appoint Chakpa Makhao-ngambi the Chief Queen. Accordingly they returned most of the villages namely Pung-Pun, Kamn, Chirang, Kharoi, Thingyitsa, Maru Kongdong, Tarao etc. but not Samjouk. It appears Samjouk was fortified by them with a chief under their suzerainty.

When Garib Niwaz became king he himself led an expedition and besieged the city of Samjouk and finally Samjouk surrendered. This expedition had cost him a lot of energy and expenditure. Thus enraged Garib Niwaz raided and plundered several important cities of Burma including Shwebo, Sagaing etc. He set on fire some cities and reduced them to ashes.

The Burmese felt the prowess of the king of Manipur after these raids and sent an envoy for terms of truce and requested again the hand of a young princess born by Garib Niwaz. This time too the intention of the Burmese king was the same as that of the earlier alliance. Somehow or other the secret plan of the Burmese king got into the ear of Garib Niwaz who cunningly agreed the request and asked them to wait for the princess at Phongdo a river port on the Chindwin river. Accordingly the Burmese king sent a team of lords and ladies along with attendants and forces on boats at Phongdo. On that fateful day a troupe of palanquins guarded by sentinels arrived at the river port of Phongdo. When the troupe arrived there was no princess but the fully equipped soldiers. These soldiers pounced upon those lords and ladies and captured all of them which included some 90 men and 110 women and brought them as captives to decorate the city of Imphal. Their prestigious gold-dubbed boat of the royal family was cut into pieces and thrown into the river.



Next Garib Niwas planned to invade Ava the capital city of Burma and arrived on the bank of the Irrawaddy river in 1749 A.D. The people of Ava became panicky and were to surrender. But a good luck fell on the Burmese. In that night the flag pole of Garib Niwas broke and the flag fell on the ground due to a strong wind. Some of his advisors took it to be a bad omen and advised the king to stop the plan for invasion. The force retired and thus Ava was saved.

The above discussions are mainly from the Burmese sources. The Manipuri accounts like Ningthourol Lambuba, Choffharol Kumbaba etc. give a different version which cannot be rejected since they give much detailed and pointed accounts. In a series of assaults against the kingdom of Ava who were people of Ava proper a Shan-Buman and Khmer whom the people of Manipur used to call Khamaran, all the time the king of Ava was preparing to revenge Manipur. The presence of Khmer a Cambodian tribe is also supported by the fact that the word Jiri in the name of the Lot-jiri hills is of Austric formation. The king of Ava according to Ningthourol Lambuba is called by the name Bharangdra Mangdra or simply Mangdra who sent an emissary in the court of king Pamheiba with very soft and flattering words requesting him for a matrimonial alliance in which Mangdra requested to give princess Satyamala, the full name is Satyamala Amar Kaithel-thianhi in marriage to him. Further the king of Ava invited king Pamheiba to visit his country. Pamheiba accepted the request and sent back the emissary. Pamheiba then thought out, if the request was sincere he would give his daughter Satyamala in marriage and on the other hand if it was a pretension he would teach him a lesson. Pamheiba then moved with a great force for the marriage ceremony. When he reached the bank of the Irrawaddy river he collected informations and found the request of the Ava king was a sincere one as he was between two fires, one the Meiteis and the other Mons. He wanted to make Manipur his friend and ally to strengthen his force in crushing the Mons whom they called the Talangs. So king Pamheiba went to

the palace of Ava and the marriage ceremony of his daughter was performed. He blessed the spouse and then returned. After the day's march Pamheiba and his forces halted for the night at a place which according to Cheitharol Kumbaba called Metu where the flag of Pamheiba was lashed away by storm in the evening. In the morning King Mangdra himself arrived in the camp of king Pamheiba and requested him to crush the revolting Talaings of Koi which posed a restless threat to Ava. Pamheiba accepted the request and crossed the Irrawaddy river and assaulted the Talaings where he captured two prominent chiefs of Talaing named Chouthap Laimingnai and Soitong Lamkhanba alive, destroyed the Talaing rebels of Koi, and he also presented several chopped off heads of Talaing rebels to his son-in-law king Mangdra<sup>2</sup>. It is also stated in Cheitharol Kumbaba that Pamheiba also lost two of his prominent men named Gargaram a Brahmin and Sougrakpam Akong in that engagement<sup>3</sup>. The event took place in the year 1719 A. D. and by that period the king of Ava according to the Burmese source is named Mahadhamayaza Dipati (1723-52 A. D.) who moved his capital from Pegu to Ava due to pressure of the Mons. King Bharangdra Mangdra is to be identified with Mahadhamayaza Dipati the latter seems to be a titular name given by the Buddhist monks. Mahadhamayaza Dipati is of Tongoo origin which the Manipuri accounts also agree. This Ava king is also referred to as Tongoo Ningthou also as Tongdoi Ningthou meaning Tongoo or Tongdoi king in Manipuri accounts.

Since Manipur became their ally in the year 1749 A. D. she stopped further raids and assaults on Ava and at the same time the Mons near Ava were reduced which could have paved the way for the growth of the Burmese power. The Mons too felt the prowess of the Manipuri force and did not further attack Ava which was an ally of Manipur for sometime. But the Mons from the

2. Ningthourol Lamfuba : edited by O. Bhogeswar Singh, page-377.

3. Cheitharol Kumbaba, published by the Manipuri Sahitya Parishad, page-73.

south under the leadership of Binnya Dala attacked Ava in 1752 A.D. and besieged it. They took away the king of Ava. In the mean time king Pamheiba was also ousted by his own sons which was often the fate of autocrat. However there arose an able leader named Alaungpaya of humble origin born at Shwebo who unified the Burmans. All Upper Burma was passed to Alaungpaya by 1754 A.D. and he proclaimed king with Shwebo as his capital. He not only defeated the Mons but also started raiding Manipur.

The Burmese never forget the humiliation they suffered in the hands of Manipur and wanted Manipur to pay the right price. The ghash on the door of the famous Pa-ola of Mandalay left by the sword of Garib Niwaz is still left unpaired till this date, perhaps, to remember the humiliation they suffered in the hands of Manipur about two and a half centuries ago, or it could have been from their sense of preserving historical monuments in tact. When the autocrat monarch Garib Niwaz was ousted by his own sons, Burma soon grew to a major power and the tide had gone to the side of Burma.

From 1755 A.D. Burma took the aggressive role and since then they invaded Manipur several times, sometimes penetrated as far as Imphal the modern capital. In a feud over the succession of throne Marjit went to the Burmese court and sought help to usurp the throne of Manipur. In 1813 A.D. he invaded Manipur with a strong Burmese force. King Chourjit unable to withstand fled to Cachar. Thus Marjit usurped the throne of Manipur. It is stated in the Burmese account that Marjit took the Burmese help on the condition that he would give Kabow Valley to Burma. But Manipuri account does not mention it. It is stated that Marjit would render services whenever wanted by the Burmese king. Accordingly the younger brother of king Bagydow sent messengers to Marjit for his help in crushing the Prime Minister who was said to have affairs with the queen. The queen charged king Bagydow had gone mad. Bagydow's younger brother wanted the help of Marjit since it was a very delicate internal problem.

Marjit sent the messengers back saying that he would be coming but he did not. However in the meantime the Chief Minister who was the virtual king was crushed.

Thus Marjit broke away and in the year 1819 A.D. the Burmese invaded Manipur. Marjit fled to Cachar. Manipur was overrun by the Burmese. They installed puppet Rajas under them. In 1825 A.D. two cousins Gambhir Singh and Nara Singh belonging to the royal house of Manipur took the help of the British, waged war against Burma and defeated the Burmese occupation forces and thus regained the ancient territory of Manipur. The British forces crushed and defeated the Burmese king who came into terms with the British.

With the defeat and expulsion of the Burmese occupation forces from the territory of ancient Manipur and the restoration of throne by the rightful heirs, the Burmese lost their right to claim either partly or wholly any territory of Manipur as theirs just as Manipur lost their claim of Shwabo, Sagaing etc. Kabow valley was never a part of Burma, it was for the Moriyas who constituted as one of the major constituents of the Manipuris since its inception as a place of human settlement. In the treaty of Yandaboo the Burmese king accepted Manipur as a sovereign independent country and further agreed not to attack Manipur again. Few years after the treaty the Burmese king wanted a part of the territory of Manipur known as Kabow valley on two grounds. Firstly, that Kabow valley was given to Burma by Marjit on the condition if he could usurp the throne with the Burmese help which he could. Secondly, to possess Kabow valley the ancient capital of Manipur was perhaps as prestigious as if the whole Manipuris were put under their heels. Politically Manipur was their bitterest foe even though there were cultural relations. The Manipuri Brahmins and astrologers were highly revered in the Burmese court of which the former is called *Kathe-pama*. They never wanted Manipuris to be present in their capitals on political grounds as seen from the accounts of Capt. Pemberton. It is said

that the captain was refused to visit Ava with his Manipuri guards. However after much request they were permitted. This is perhaps from a fear or apprehension of the past experiences that something unwarranted assault could have sparked off by those few Manipuri guards which was only about a score. Their official ground of the demand was the first one which has actually no logic in it, since not only Marjit the usurper but the Burmese occupation forces too were defeated and the throne was regained by the rightful heirs.

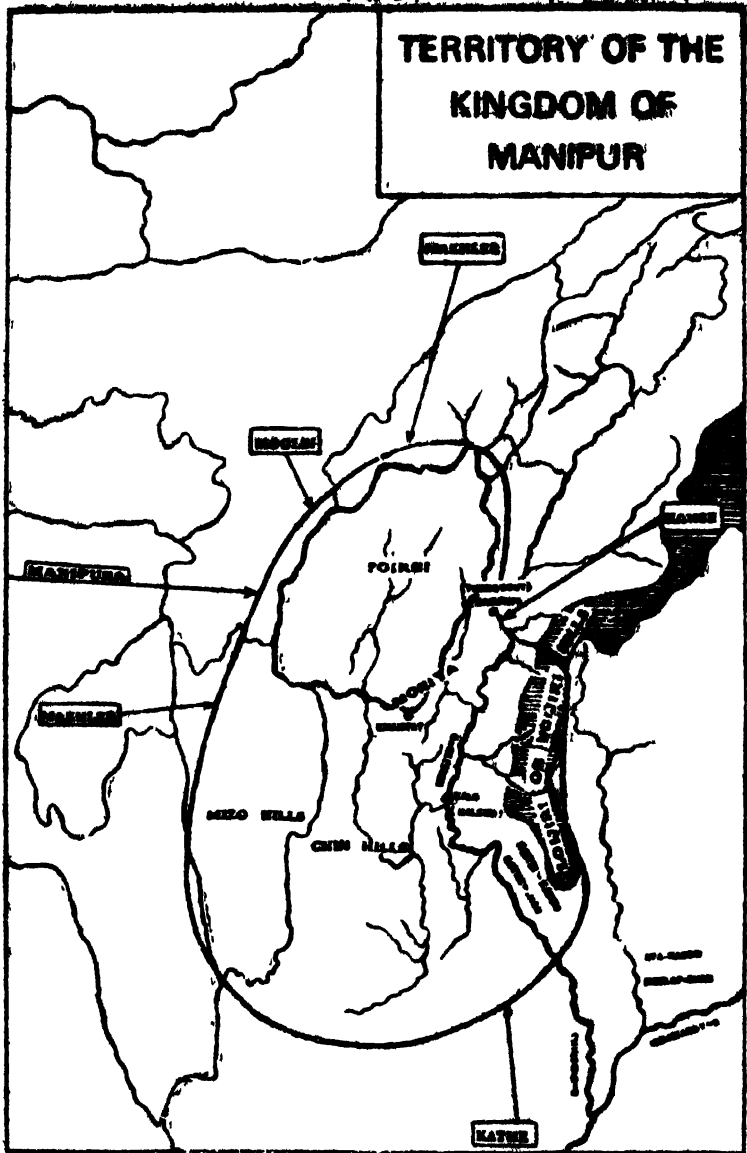
The British government was tired of the war with the Burmese and perhaps wanted to appease the Burmese king. Manipur became an ally of the British and hence the Governor General on the advice of Mr. Burney the British resident in Ava transferred Kabow valley to Burma for which an annual compensatory rent of Rs 6000/- was paid to Manipur. Further it is stated that the payment of compensatory rent will be stopped if Kabow valley was returned to Manipur. India and Burma became one country under the British, and again in the year 1937 A.D. Burma was separated. By that time Sir Churachand Singh the Maharaja of Manipur submitted a memorandum to the British authorities for the transfer of Kabow valley to Manipur. The British authorities kept mum, however they continued to pay the annual compensatory rent till 1947 A.D. when a vacuum arose. India and Burma became independent\* in the years 1947 A.D. and 1948 A.D. respectively and Manipur assumed a sovereign status. In that year Bodha-chandra Singh the Maharaja of Manipur submitted a representation to the Governor General of India who took the assets and liabilities from the British authorities, for the transfer of Kabow valley to Manipur. The Indian Government also kept mum. In 1949 A.D. Manipur was merged with India under duress in collusion with the local politicians, attaining from sovereignty to the Indian colonial status with subjects progressively down graded to the status of the third grade Indian citizens till 1972 A.D. when a change occurred, even though it was imminent that Manipur was to merge with the Indian Union in due course.

The Burmese people were very sensitive over the acquisition of Kabow valley and even announced boldly when they heard the move of the Maharaja of Manipur, that 'an inch of land of Kabow valley would be ceded to and given to Manipur'. Since the year 1948 A.D. the Burmese Government persistently moved the Government of India for the final transfer of Kabow valley to Burma. Then the Burmese Government headed by U Nu met the Indian Prime Minister for the final settlement. Thus in the year 1954 A.D. the Indian administrators headed by Jawaharlal Nehru taking the role of a second Marjit in collusion with the local political leaders of the same feathers with strong parochialism for their herd betraying the cause of their motherland for their narrow gains, gave Kabow valley, for which so much blood had been shed, for which the people of Manipur suffered tortures like being chained by long canes perforating through the palms and pulled like cattle, for which children were allowed to die of suffocation by thrushing them into small houses charged with fumes of burning chillies by the ruthless invaders, for which the women population suffered abductions and rapes, for which the sucking mothers killed their own babies by smashing on stone slabs lest their cry should give attention to the marauders roaming in search of women and be caught and humiliated, in the hands of the Burmese occupation forces, and which the ancient people of Manipur took as holy land as seen from the accounts that Pamheiba (Garib Niwaz) on Sunday, March 29, 1725 A.D. corresponding to the 20th Lunar Lamda, 1646 Saka, carried the mortal remains of his ancestors and cremated on the bank of the Ningthi (Chindwin) river on the second day with full Vedic rites substituting the Ningthi for the holy river Ganges, to Burma without referring to the nation i.e. the Indian Parliament which remains unratified till this date against the very sentiments of the Manipuris.) Thus the ancient capital of Manipur the Kabow valley had gone with wind ) Manipur without Kabow valley has no life. Manipur had already lost enough parts of her territory specially on the southern side. Some parts are now in Burma and some parts are in Mizoram specially due to British pressure. It would

have been wiser to lose more parts adjoining Burma rather than to part with Kabow valley.

Thus Manipur has been divided into two, North Manipur and South Manipur. The Indian classic name Manipur is retained in North Manipur which is now in India and South Manipur which is divided into a number of units with different names is in Burma. The so-called Manipuris are now concentrated mainly in North Manipur particularly in Imphal valley.

4. The then Indian Prime Minister who was indeed a man of reason had so far been successful in appeasing the Burmese who declared their determination that 'an inch of their territory as they claimed to be ceded to', who in turn remained a faithful friend of India since that event but seems to have failed with the Chinese. The Communist Government of China demanded a strip of land that had been included in the map of Arunachal Pradesh drawn by the Indian Government. But the Indian Government refused and as a result of it there was the Sino-Indian conflict or war of 1962 A.D. in which India suffered perhaps the worst humiliation in her history, a Himalayan blunder in the Himalayas. People were fed with informations like the Chinese people were starving and the Communist Government wanted to reduce their population and hence they waged war against India with a rifleman followed by five *lathemen* so that most of them be killed in the battle, also indicating want of food, clothing and ammunition. Apart from this where Bomdila fell into the hands of the Chinese the Prime Minister lamented over the All India Radio with a flickering voice "B-o-m-d-i-l-a f-a-l-l-s" which instead of generating a wave of farther courage gave panic to the people of North Eastern region.





## THE CLAN FORMATION

Different tribes with different dialects including the Indo-Aryans came and settled on this land at different periods. They in course of time coalesce into some principal units. When all such political units united under the hegemony of the Poirei kings it gave rise to the birth of the Meitei nation or community and each unit began to exist as separate clans of the community.

There are seven clans found in vogue among the Meitei community of to-day. They are the (1) Mangāng, (2) Luwāng, (3) Khuman, (4) Angom, (5) Moirāng, (6) Khā-Ngānba, and (7) Sarāng-Leisāngthem. It is believed that certain changes had been attributed to in the early part of the 18th century A.D. along with the proclamation of Hinduism as the state religion. In that change the Mangang clan was given another name Ningthouja Clan meaning the royal clan. The Kha-Nganba clan was divided into Khaba and Nganba clans respectively; and Sarang-Leisangthem was changed to Chenglei and Leisangthem clans respectively. With these changes the total number of clans rose to nine. Each clan was given a Hindu Gotra. The Meiteis called the clan *Yek* or *Salai*,<sup>1</sup> or by compounding the two words *Yek-Salai* indicating the words belonging to different dialects. But these changes appear not to have worked well except in the case of the Mangang clan. This clan is now commonly known as Ningthouja clan. The Khaba and Nganba clans continue to exist as a single clan under the name Kha-Nganba clan as before. Similarly the Chenglei and

1 It is interesting to note that Ceylon or Sri Lanka was earlier called *Tamabani*, and the people of the middle east called *Taprobane* and *Palaesimundu*. But in the geography of Ptolemy a new name *SALIKE* along with its old name *Taprobane* and *Simoundu* is found to have been given. The inhabitants of Salike were known to Ptolemy as *Salai*. See *History of Bengal*, edited by R.C. Mazumdar, vol. I, page-39 foot-note.

Leisangthem clans continue to function as Sarang-Leisangthem and the Chenglei clan is dropped.

Of the above seven clans the first three clans namely Mangang, Luwang, and Khuman originally belong to the Poireis. Literary accounts give very confusing materials of these three clans. The accounts describe them as the three Gurus and have shown to have existed before the existence of these tribes. They are the oldest clans of the Meiteis. The formation of these three clans is estimated to be about the middle of the 13th century A.D., possibly during the reign of Khongtekcha (c. 1250-60 A. D.) when the Mangang Haos became Poireis.

The neo-Tibetans founded a kingdom with Poreiton as the first formal king on this valley near the southern part of Kanglatongbi plateau. He was succeeded by his son, grandson etc. The neo-Tibetan kingdom comprised of the following tribes namely Chakkha, Lei, Khu, Kham, Man, Nung and Hou of which the Chakkha, Lei, and Khu belonged to the Himalayan tribes; Kham belonged to a tribe closer to the Tibetans, Man belonged to the Mon race; Nung belonged to the tribe of Tai origin who founded the Nan Chao kingdom and Hou belonged to some Tibeto-Burman or Sino-Tibetan tribes. This neo-Tibetan kingdom is found to have divided into three sub-political groups namely (1) Chakkha-Nung, (2) Lei-Khu-Hou, and (3) Khu-Man-Kham. Poreiton belonged to the Chakkha-Nung group. So the Chakkhan dynasty was in the hands of Chakkha-Nung. Luwang Punshiba the fourth descendant of Poreiton had several wives and several sons and daughters. By that time the Poireis became bigger in number and were becoming more prosperous. When Luwang Punshiba died at his old age there were possibly some feuds over the succession, but most of the accounts available with us are silent about it. As a result, the whole neo-Tibetan family was broken up and started splitting into different groups. Some groups moved towards the east and settled on the source of Kongba river the *Kongba-ru* and some towards the south-west near present Patsoi.

The Mangāng: The Lei-Khu-Hou group who moved and settled on the Kongba-ru wanted a separate chief of their own and invited Nongta-Tukuplik one of the great grandsons of Luwang Punshiba to become their chief. Nongta was the son of Likleng and Yabiroka, both of them were Chakkhans. Likleng was a Lambu-Tupu of Leihou tribes i.e. officer-in-Charge of the Leihou tribes and was one of the grandsons of Luwang Punshiba. It is likely that he had also another name Luwang Langmaiba. Different literary accounts indicate the chaotic political condition of the society of that period due to want of a king which led to the invitation of Nongta. This group of neo-Tibetan family flourished under the able leadership of Nongta who married one girl named Laisa-ra belonging to a Heirong tribe. The Heirong was a Tai origin closely akin to Nung. Nongta became the king of this group of Neo-Tibetan family and since then this group of people emerged as a separate political unit. More details are discussed in the section on Pakhangba.

Sometime in the latter part of the 12th century A.D. there were several Tibeto-Burman tribes found inhabiting the Loi-jing or Loibi-ching ranges. There was a particular Tibeto-Burman tribe named Mangang Hao who had some Bodo elements. The name Hao was given to these groups of Tibeto-Burman tribes. The Mangang-Hao settled on the hills now known as Laimaton Phourungba. The literary account Ningthourol Lambuba describes the hill where the Mangang Haos settled as Loi-jing Phouwoi Ching. The Mangang Haos were defeated by Naothingkhong (c. 1215-50 A.D.) at about the early part of his reign by capturing Konkhucha the Mangang chieftain alive, for which Naothingkhong is described as *Mangang-Ngamba* meaning 'Victor of Mangang'. Thus a large number of Mangangs were absorbed by this Lei-Khu-hou group of the Pairsis.

The Mangang Haos were closely akin to the tribes like Mayang, Mahui etc. who were of Bodo origin but mixed with Tai. Details are discussed in the section on Mangang, Mayang etc.

The names ended by the suffixes 'cha' and '-rembi' for the males and the females respectively were very common for these group of Tibeto-Burman tribes. The Lei-Khu-Hou group of the Poireis were much influenced by the Mangangs and later by the Mayangs another Tibeto-Burman tribe as evident from the name of the successors to Naothingkhong who were successively Khongtek-cha and Keiren-cha. The absorbed Mangangs were for the time being called Poirei-Mangangs. When the Mangangs completely got amalgamated with this group of Poireis, this group became known as Mangangs. Thus the name Mangang clan emerged from the name of the Tibeto-Burman tribe Mangang. It may be mentioned here that before the amalgamation with Mangangs, this group had already absorbed a good number of people belonging to the Lei-Hou, Ma-Hou and Heirong. The Mangang clan is now commonly known as the Ningthouja clan.

(The Luwāng : The Chakkha-Nung group of people of the Poireis also became scattered after the death of Luwang Punshiba at about 980 A.D. As stated earlier he had several sons and daughters left. Several of them moved towards the south and the south-west of their settlement and established different families there. At a later period they moved as far as Luwangshangbam and Lāngol hills to the south, and as far as to the foothills of Loijing to south-west. Different families started naming each family after the name of their founder, for example, Yaoreiba and Kaireiba who were the descendants of Luwang Punshiba. The descendants of Yaoreiba were known as Yaoreibas, and so on. In literary accounts girls belonging to Yaoreibas are found to have been described as Yaoreiba Chanu, and so on. It appears from about the middle of the 13th century A.D. the entire Chakkha-Nung was given the name Luwang, probably from the name of Luwang Punshiba or from the name Luwang given to the Chakkha rulers by the Nungs. The father of Luwang Punshiba was Khunthiba. He is also found to have been written as Luwang Khunthiba in some accounts. It appears the later text writers had given him the title Luwang posthumously as done to all the

kings belonging to this group of Poireis. The title Luwang also pronounced as Ruang in non-Manipur source is found to have been adopted by Nan Chao king Ko-lo-feng ( 748-78 A. D. ) a Chinese corrupt word for Khun Luwang Phung meaning 'Lord Luwang the Glorious'. Prior to Ko-lo-feng, one Tai Prince who rebelled against the ruler of Zimme in 638 A.D. is named Phra Ruang (Luwang).<sup>2</sup> Briggs says that this name is adopted by some kings of Siam also. Hence the word Luwang or Ruang is supposed to be a patronymic name, that is, deriving from the name of an ancestor. Thus it indicates the Nungs were a group of people having a common ancestor with that of the Tai tribe who founded the Nan Chao kingdom. In Manipuri accounts people belonging to Nung are often described as Nungba or Nungbal. The title Luwang is found to have been adopted by the Chakkhan princes from the fourth descendant of Poireiton. When the Luwang clan came into existence some people belonging to this group are sometimes described as Nungbal otherwise simply as Luwang. It shows that the people of Luwang clan had two basic components namely Luwang proper who were of Chakkhan origin and Nungba or Nungbal who were of Tai origin. But some manuscripts use the term quite loosely. The early people were very particular about their ethnic origin, for example, the Kharoi tribe who later amalgamated with or absorbed by the Khumans are found to have been entered in accounts with the name Kharoi while mentioning the clan. Thus we find Kaireima the wife of Naophangba is entered as Kharoiron Kaireima indicating the true ethnic identity of Kaireima. But later chroniclers and scholars enter her simply as Khuman-Chanu. The Luwangs appear to have maintained their earlier Chakkha-Nung culture. )'

The title Luwang was already in vogue while Poireiton was in Khamnung Sawa. The Nung people usually called the Chakkha rulers of Khamnung Sawa by the name Luwang and later all the Chakkhas were known by that name. Hence Chakkha-Nung was

2. Dr. Gogoi: *Tai and the Tai kingdoms*, page-3.

later called Nung-Luwang as found among the tribes of Mishmis and other Arunachal Pradeshis. However the Nung-Luwang dialect in Mishmi and other Arunachal Pradeshis is now substantially altered due to the presence of Tibeto-Burman, Tibetan and other Asiatic tribes. So the early Nung-Luwang who moved to the Mishmi range, and other parts of Arunachal Pradesh and the Chakkha-Nung of the Kangla-tongb<sup>i</sup> plateau who were known as Poirai were next of kin. The emergence of the whole Chakkha-Nung as Luwang is perhaps from the period of Khongtekcha when the clan of the Poirai to which Khongtekcha belonged became known as Mangang.

So far we have discussed the South East Asiatic sources concerning the etymology of the word *Luwang* or *Ruwang* which is not convincing though the Tai rulers adopted it from about the 7th century A.D. It is simply assumed as a patronymic name. However in the Greek and Latin sources, it is mentioned that the Saka who entered India in the first century A.D. and founded the renowned Saka era in the Indian history was called *Saiwang*. The Saka is also said to have belonged to a branch of Yueh-chi tribe or race, and the Kushanas were the Kuei-shung which is also a branch of Yueh-chi race. The Manipuri sources as discussed in earlier sections Yu-chakkha is said to have belonged to the Chakkha tribe or clan of the Chakkha tribe, and again the Sakya or Chakkha were called *Luwang*. The amalgamated Nung and Chakkha tribes were called *Nung-Luwang* in the southern Tibet sources.

The Yueh-chi and Yu-chakkha were at least cognate tribes if not the different clans of the same tribe and the words *Saiwāng* and *Luwāng* are unmistakably of the same formations. It is most likely that the ruler or king of Saka and of Sakya were known by the names *Saiwāng* and *Luwāng* respectively in their respective dialects, and the culture penetrated to the Tai world and later adopted by the Tai rulers as a title. The suffix *wang* in the above words which means 'high' or 'beyond' in old Manipuri is a very common

suffix in the dialect of Chakkha, for example, Nawang, Leewang, Iwang etc., and taking into account of this meaning the word Luwāng may be interpreted as 'head-high' where *lu* means 'head', which literally means a prominent man i.e. figuratively a king.

The word *wang* is a vocabulary of present Manipuri language and is used in the same sense as above. We find words like *wang-chaoba* meaning 'tall and big' where *chao* is a Chinese Mongoloid word meaning 'great' and *ba* a Tibeto-Burman suffix or the Tai word *hpa* meaning 'king', *a-wang a-nem* meaning 'high and low' where the prefix *a* is an adjective prefix. If the word stands alone it gives meanings like 'height' e.g. *wang(ba)* and 'beyond' e.g. *wang(ma)*. The word *a-wang* also means 'the north' which is possibly derived from the fact that the northern part of the habitation of the early Poireis were high and the southern parts were low valleys.

The obsolete Manipuri word for skull is *la-lu* but the modern word is *kok* which is a Tibeto-Burman origin. With the word *lu* we find words *lu-mang* (forehead, front), *lu-kham* (end of the skull on the back), *lu-mei* (spine the tail of skull) etc.

In the European and Middle East sources the word *wang* of Saiwāng is also said to have the meaning 'chief' or 'king', more or less the same Manipuri meaning for the word *wang*.

In early Manipuri the word Luwāng is used to mean king like Luwāng Punshiba which means 'king Punshiba' but from about the latter part of the 13th century A.D. when the Mangang became Poireis the word is used with the Mangang word *ningthou* meaning 'king' in a compounded form like 'Luwāng-Ningthou' Punshiba as the compounded words *laxja-ishing*, *shingyel-leirang* etc. With the emergence of Luwang as the name of a clan the meaning of 'Luwāng-Ningthou' has further changed to 'king of the Luwāng clan' which stands to this date as the modern language.

✓ The Khuman: The Khu-Man-Kham group of the Poireis moved towards the south-west as far as Patsoi from the south of

Kanglatongbi by about the same time with that of Lei-Khu-kou group who moved towards Kongba-ru. This group of people appear to have become prosperous in their new settlement. In the beginning of the 13th century A.D. they were found still occupying the area.<sup>3</sup> In Ningthourol Lambuba it is stated that a girl named Nārum Kāngbi Sānting Ngāubi who belonged to the Thangnga and Kampong clans of the Man race of the Khu-Man-Kham awaiting anxiously for the whole night for her sweet heart prince Hongnem-yoy Khunjao (Naothingkhong) while the latter did not return the whole night, rebuked her brother Angoukoi and also her father Amukoi for their ill-treatment to the prince. It is said, as the night was over the bright sun appeared on the sky, she exclaimed, "Tumit sung pātē" meaning 'The sun too rises' In the dialect of the Man the sun is called *Tumit* and 'to rise' is *pātā(ba)*. The account further says that the place name Pātsōi is given since that occasion.<sup>3</sup> The word *sōi* means 'to miss' and *pāt* means 'to rise'. By compounding these two words the place name Pātsōi is derived. Patsoi is only about 7 or 8 kilometers to the west of Imphal. This group of people shifted from this settlement to a place lying to the east of the Loktak lake by about the middle of the 13th century A.D. from the pressure of tribes of Tai origin like Lai, Senbi, Haorok, Konthou etc. from the south. The Man had two sub-clans namely Thāngnga and Kampong who had some associations with the Chengleis. When they settled on the east of Loktak lake this group of Khu-Man-Kham became known as Khuman. They started absorbing or mixing with different tribes namely Kharoi, Hangoi, Nongyai, Heirem, Khunjan etc. who had arrived from the Upper Iril valley on the east of Loktak lake possibly through the course of the Thoubal river. The Nongyai and Kham(ba) tribes became prominent in the Khuman setup. It appears the chieftainship of the Khumans was passed on to the Nongyais. Again Nongyai and Kham(ba) appear to have conflicts over the succession. In the historical novel Khamba-Thoibi,

3. Ningthourol Lambuba, edited by Q. Bhogeswar Singh, pages-213.



Purem-ba who belonged to a Kham(ba) tribe took assylum in the Moirang principality. The novel depicts him, '*Moirāngda saidāngba*' meaning 'taking assylum in Moirang', whose original principality is said to be Khuman. In the closing part of the 13th century A.D. one Khuman named Thingkonbanba who is also found to have been described as Khuman-Nongyai, who belonged to a Nongyai tribe, while on an expedition towards the southern hills found a village named Mara inhabited by the Bangals. He defeated the Bangal chief and brought them. In another expedition further south of the above he also found a settlement of Pāsis (Basis) a mixed stock of Tibeto-Burman Mayāng and Bangals. He also defeated them. Thus in the closing part of the 13th century A.D. the Khumans absorbed Bangals, proto-Bangals and Pasis. The Khumans became one of the most mixed clans.

In *Sagei Salairoi*, published by the State Kala Akademi, the ancestor of Khuman is shown as Poireiton which cannot be accepted. As discussed in the earlier sections, Khuman is an amalgamated tribe of Khu and Man. The bulk of Khu are found in the Tangkhuls and they belonged to the Yu-chakkha clan of the Chakkha and Man were of Mon origin whose cognate tribes were Marem, Maring and Miao. Their earlier chief is not found in any text but one man named Amukoi whose daughter got married to Hongnem-yoy Khunjao (Naothingkhong) is found in the early part of the 13th century A.D. Again Yoirāngpok Punshiba (written as Moirānpok Punshiba) is also given to be a descendant of Poireiton in the Khuman genealogy of the above mentioned book. This too is also not at all acceptable, since Yoirāngpok belonged to an altogether different tribe. He belonged to the Kharoi clan of the Thoubal tribe and lived some three and half centuries after Poireiton as evident from the account that his younger brother Kācheng Khuyee's daughter Kairema got married to Naophangba as the second wife who bore a son named Thamanglang from whom descended the Yengkhom *Sagei*. Yoirāngpok at the most can be a contemporary of Yaoreiba, if not his descendants since the first wife of Naophangba is a Yaoreiba *chanu*. Yaoreiba is the 11th

descendant of Poireiton as found in the same book and moreover by that period the Kharoi tribe inhabited on the eastern side of the Iril valley on the east of the Kongba-ru, while the Khumans inhabited on the northern side of Patsoi. The Khumans moved to the eastern side of the Loktak lake and got amalgamated with the Nongyai and became known as Khuman-Nongyai. The chieftainship of Khuman-Nongyai passed on to a Nongyai named Thingkonhanba. The Kharoi tribe later amalgamated with the Khuman-Nongyai. So the ancestors of Khuman should have started from the ancestor of the Thangnga and Kampong clan of the Man. Since the major chunk of Khu became Tangkhuls and only few who were not prominent were with the Thāngnga and Kampong, we do not get any prominent man belonging to Khu who were with Thangnga and Kampong. But we find some prominent men like Pankhaichamba who rescued a small girl found sitting alone near her dead mother who was the daughter of the Shelloy-Langmai chief as discussed in earlier sections besides Amukoi. Since Khuman-Nongyai became a principality from the time of Nongyai Thingkonhanba the best genealogy should have started from him. Prior to him is the genealogy of different tribes that constituted the Khuman.

The Angom : The Nongbāls before they emerged as a separate political unit, were the subjects of the kings of the Poirei clan to which Nongta also belonged. They amalgamated with the Tibeto-Burman tribes Kāng(ba) and Kong(ba) before the emergence of the Mangang clan, possibly in the 10th century A. D. before the birth of Nongta. Later they gradually mixed with the Shelloy-Langmais. The amalgamation seems to have been accomplished under the able leadership of one person named Puleilomba whose ethnic origin seems to be a Nongbal proper, for which he is still regarded as the father of the Angoms. The date of Puleilomba is not known with any degree of certainty but supposed to be a man of the 10th or 11th century A. D. In some accounts Puleilomba is projected to be a contemporary person of Luwang Langmaiba the grandson of Luwang Punshiba. In a likewise

manner he is also described as the foster father of Pakhangba in somewhat an allegorical way. With the increasing number of tribes amalgamated, the Nongbals posed to be a political unit. Later they amalgamated with almost all the tribes of non-Himalayan Mongoloid origins inhabiting the lower course of the Iril and Thoubal rivers which included tribes like Nongmai, Funan, Maring, Senbi and other Cambodian tribes. We often get confused the Langmai of Shelloy-Langmai with the Nongmai. They were two distinct tribes of the Tibeto-Burman family. Details are discussed in the sections on Shelloy-Langmai and on Nongmai. In later period the Nongbals also absorbed some Bangals and proto-Bangals.

As the Nongbals accumulated more and more tribes, they became politically the most prominent unit besides the Poireis in the northern part of the valley, even though they came under the hegemony of the Poirei kings. There is certain amount obscurity about the origin of the appellation Angom, or how the name Nongbal changed to Angom. Nor the historical accounts so far available mention any tribe whose name is Angom and got merged with the Nongbals. Hence it is certain that the name Angom is an outgrowth. It is therefore expedient to recourse to the history of the amalgamated Nongbals. The chiefs of the amalgamated Nongbals were called Angou-pāmba, a title of the Nongbal chiefs conferred by the Poirei kings, but they were commonly called Angouba or simply Angou. Suppose, for example, there is a Nongbal whose name is Chamba, people would call him Chamba Nongbal or Angou-jamba Nongbal. In the year 1551 A. D. during the reign of the Poirei king Chalāmba one person named Om-ba according to Cheitharol Kumbaba<sup>4</sup> and Om according to Ningthourol Lambuba<sup>5</sup> was appointed the chief of amalgamated Nongbals, who was a very prominent man. Om seems to be a controversial child of the parent. Since he was the chief of the Nongbals, people generally called him Angou-Om Nongbal and further deviated to Angom Nongbal.

4. Cheitharol Kumbaba, published by the Manipuri Sahitya Parishad, p.14.

5. Ningthourol Lambuba, edited by O. Bhogeswar Singh, page-175.

The name was so popular that Angom Nongbal became a family title of the Nongbals and latter text writers projected all Nongbals as Angoms and we find names like Angom Nongbal Kongyāngba of the historical novel Moirang Thoibi, where Kongyangba is the forename of the person. Later the word Nongbal is dropped and the name Angom remains, which constituted one of the clans of the Meiteis.

The meaning of Angou in modern Manipuri as well as some Tibeto-Burmans is 'white'. If this meaning is applied to the Nongbal chief, the answer is not befitting a chief, but in the dialect of Pang a Tai tribe *ngao* means 'great' or 'powerful' and if the word Angou is a phonetic variant of *ngao*, the word gives a befitting meaning of a chief.

The Moirāng : The Moirang proper i.e. the Mahui is a group of Tibeto-Burman entering Imphal valley by the southern route. They became amalgamated with the Keges, Moriyas, Ngangois etc. as soon as they arrived on this valley at about 1270 A.D. The Moirang principality became a host for the fugitives. Thus the amalgamated population of the Moirang principality rolled on with more tribes which included Senbi, Lai, Austric, Kahow, Khuyon, Kayensucha, Mayang and some remnants of Heitem, Khunjai, Bangal, Kouba tribes. Thus Moirang became an admixture of tribes. Basically Moirangs had the elements of the Himalayan tribes Chakkha, Moriya, Khu, Nga or Nganu ; Ma the Bodo ; Lai the Tai ; Hui the Tai ; Kege the Chinese, and other elements. But the name Moirang is erroneously applied and retained to be a clan name.

The Khā-Ngānba : The Kha-Nganba clan is believed to have derived from two closely related Khaba and Nganba. Both of them seems to be the brothers of a family belonging to some descendants of Thongaiba the chief of Nga or Nga-nu tribes. As discussed in the section on Thongaren, Thongaiba belonged to a Chakkhan tribe. It is likely that Nga-ngoi belonged to a clan of Nga. The period of emergence of this clan cannot be estimated

precisely but believed to be from about the 14th century A.D. It seems they belonged to the tribes ruled by Ngangoi Yoimongba a prominent figure of the early period who had a dialogue with Poireiton when the latter met him while he was clearing the course of a river as mentioned in Poireiton Khunthok.

The Sarāng-Leisāngthem . At the moment it is difficult to give any substantiated account on the origin of the Sarang-Leisangthem. However they are believed to be some offshoots of Thāngyi a Chenglei clan.

In addition to the above stated absorptions and amalgamations, all the clans without a single exception absorbed different tribes who migrated in small numbers and took up the clan to which they were admitted. It is frequently seen that one particular tribe is found to have been absorbed by different Meitei clans. As discussed above the Khumans absorbed a good number of Bangals. The Bangals differ ethnically from the rest of the Tibeto-Burman tribes. The Bangals who entered Manipur were possibly of Kanarese origin mixed with other proto-Bangals. The Bangals could not form a clan of their own in the Meitei setup due to the loss of their political nucleus

There are other tribes who entered this land and became Meiteis after the clan formations were completed and at the same time they were not amalgamated with any of the then existing clans, continued to live without any clan except with family titles or Sageis which were allotted to them e.g. Kshetrimayum and Lairkyengbam. By now it is a Sagei but in course of time it may evolve to a clan with different Sageis.

Some of the Kshetrimayums claim that they were from Orissa and originally belonged to a Brahmin community. It may be mentioned here that there was a community or rather caste called Brahman-Kshetriya in present north-eastern part of Karnataka and western Orissa to which Samanta Sena the founder of the Sena dynasty of Bengal belonged. The arrival of these Kshetris later called Kshetrimayums cannot be expected to be much earlier than the 17th century A.D.

Most of the tribes of Tai or their admixtures namely Phayeng, Sekmai, Andro, Leimaram, Khurkhul, Koutruk and Chairen even though they maintain a separate identity are within the fold of the general Meitei clan and Sagei.

There are some 712 Sāgeis or family titles comprising the seven general clans of the Meiteis excluding those of the Brahmins and Mussalmans. But in some accounts it is mentioned that there are altogether 749 Sageis. For more details see latter part of this book.

The Indo-Aryan Brahmins who migrated from the Indian mainland by small waves from about the beginning of the 15th century A.D. onwards and who became Meiteis, did not possess any clan. But they were allotted family titles only. Now we find 47 Brahmin family titles only even though it is mentioned in some accounts that there are 49 Sageis. The Brahmins who became Meiteis were known as Meitei-Bamons or Manipuri-Brahmins. Details are given in the latter part of this book.

In a likewise manner the Indo-Afghan Mussalmans who came to this land at the beginning of the 17th century A.D. and who became Meiteis were also allotted family titles only but not the clan. There are about 40 family titles or Sageis belonging to the Mussalmans. Most of the new comers among the Muslims do not possess family title or Sagei. The Mussalmans preserved their distinct identity in matters of religion. They are called Meitei-Pangals or Manipuri-Muslims.

The Meitei-Bamon and Meitei-Pangal constitute about 5% and 10% respectively of the entire general Meitei population.

The writer tried to collect materials about the origin of the clan of the tribes inhabiting the hill areas of Manipur. But the materials collected so far are very scanty and therefore cannot be scientifically substantiated. However, the old tribes like Maring, Tangkhul, Kabui, Chothe, Kom, Moyon, Monsang, Koireng etc. appear to have developed seven clans or Sageis on a similar pattern with the Meiteis.

At about the 17th century A.D. the community of the valley had some six clans namely (1) Mangang, (2) Luwang, (3) Khuman, Angom, (4) Chenglei, and (5) Moirang. In some manuscripts the Chenglei clan is found to have been written as Chengleibam. Somewhat later at certain stage the Chenglei clan appears to have lost its existence, and instead of that clan three more clans emerged. They were (1) Sarang-Leisangthem, (2) Khaba, and (3) Nganba. Some accounts like Sagei Salairol published by the State Kala Academi show that Khaba and Nganba clans were offshoots of the Mangang tribes. This is obviously doubtful.

Since the coming of the fresh wave of Hinduism during the period of Pamheiba (1709-1748 A.D.), when the community of this valley became known as Meiteis, the Meitei clans were allotted different Hindu Gotras. Thus the Hindu Gotras were allotted as follows: (1) Shandilya Gotra to the Mangangs, (2) Kasyapa Gotra to the Luwangs, (3) Madbukalya (Moudgalya) and Mandalya Gotras to the Khumans, (4) Kousika and Goutama Gotras to the Angoms, (5) Atreya Gotra to the Moirangs, (6) Bhardwaja Gotra to the Chengleis or Chengleibams.

There has been some confusions on the allocation of Gotras on the rest of the clans. However it may be mentioned here that the Hindu Gotras were allotted as follows (a) Bharadwaja Gotra to the Khabas, (b) Noisika Gotra to the Nganbas, (c) Angirasha Gotra to the Sarang-Leisangthems, and (d) Vasistha Gotra to the Chengleis. The discrepancies arise from the fact that a person may change his clan with the permission of the royal court. New entrants were found to have been allotted separate Gotras within the same clan. Apart from this fact the society adopted a strictly exogamous system a complement to the prohibition of Swa-Gotra Vivaha of the Hindu law, and prior to that period the Meiteis were both endogamous and exogamous. When the Gotra system was introduced there were instances of marrying girls of the same clan by the rulers or the nobles. In such circumstances the clan and the Gotra of the family to which the girl belonged was usually changed to escape the prohibitory hand of the law.

In the early period the clans usually signified some ethnic units but gradually changed to political units. By now it has lost to a great extent its meaning and significance. It has become almost a notional name. It appears from the study of records that the Khumans were the most mixed group followed by Mangang, Moirang, Angom, Lawang, Kha-Nganba and Sarang-Leisangthem successively on the ladder.

All evidences clearly show that the clans or the tribes preferred marriage within the same tribe or clan. Marriages with other tribes or clans were not conducive. There were tribal feuds and vendetta. More over not a single exogamous tribe migrated to this land and became Meiteis. In course of time the society in the valley became heterogeneous, free inter-marriages were there.

The early social history or social set-up of the Meiteis was that of a tribal feudalism. The society may be divided into two strata, the nobles and the commoners. The commoners married by simple processes of mutual co-habitation and declaration of man and wife somewhat similar to that of the Gandharba Vivaha of the Hindus with social sanctions. The nobles were also not free from such practices. However, concurrently for the nobles a nobler form of marriage following a code of customary marriage was generally adopted. We do not get any material dealing with the rituals of marriage in the early period. From about the time of Naothingkhong (c 1215-50 A.D.) we have some records how the marriage was performed and how the bride was sent to the in-laws by the bride's father. Chingurembi Khonglup gives a vivid reflection on it. Since the time of Naothingkhong the general lay out of the form of marriage is preserved by the Meiteis with some modifications here and there e.g. the costume of the bride of today is of post Bhagyachandra period.

People in the early period married at a stage when the biological needs were felt without any social restriction. It was also a common practice of raiding a tribe for capturing their women they liked. In such raids even respectable ladies were carried away to the pride and valour of the raiders. In the present perspective it



is a barbarous practice but by that period it was the social order of the day. In such raids the horde need not necessarily all nobles, there could have been commoners who also in turn got their share of the catch. Instances of such practices are recorded in accounts like Ningthourol Lambuba and others. Some instances may be cited as follows : (a) one noble of Naothingkhong named Hao-yang Payangba while raiding a tribe for capturing their women he liked was killed in the action, (b) the wife of Thangyi Khongjomba, who belonged to a descendant of Yaoreiba was forcibly taken away by Poirer king Naokhamba (c. 1133-1140 A.D.) while she had already conceived a child of five month's term and became his wife, and so on.

Formal marriages following certain codes of marriages were mainly confined to the tribe or the clan itself and between tribes having good relations. Each clan as stated earlier was sub-divided into a number of smaller units called Sagei or family title. All members of a Sagei were practically related to one another. None of the migrating tribes who constituted the Meiteis practiced incest or its similar nature. It is therefore seen that none of the Meiteis married within the same Sageis. It was forbidden well before the latest wave of the Hinduism. It is also certain that the Meiteis were free to marry anyone from outside the Sagei which may be of the same clan before the allocation of the Hindu Gotra. Literary accounts reveal many fearful consequences that may befall on to the spouse as well as to their progenies if people marry within the same clan as written in the so-called Puyas which make people frightened by the awesome sequences, and thus they never tried to marry within the same clan. It is simply a rider to the religious scriptures. It served more than a decree of the king on this strength.

In early period all children born by any wife whatever the form of marriage be, or whatever the progenitor of the child be, the child was accepted by the family. Prior to the Hindu law it was mainly out of necessity that the child was taken as the child of the family, but in the later period it was the application of the

Hindu law where the child belonged to the so-called *Kshetra-Putra*. As the ends were the same there had been no change. However it may be pointed out that the *Kshetra-Putras* are not preferred to inherit the throne if there were other brothers begotten by the king. As referred to in above, Naokhamba had two sons born by his queen who was earlier the wife of Thargyi Khongjomba the Chenglei chief, namely Naophang Ahanba and Naophangba. Naophang Ahanba was a child begotten by Thargyi Khongjomba and his younger brother Naophangba was the child begotten by the king. There was a row over the succession but Naophangba succeeded his father.

## THE MOIRANG PRINCIPALITY

The accounts of the Kege principality of the Moriya rulers are lost in obscurity. The last Moriya ruler before the Kege principality went to the hands of the Lai chiefs, was possibly Moriya Oinu Seng Raja. It is said that he was captured alive by Khongtekcha the Poirei king according to Ningthourol Lambuba. It is very likely that he was killed. So also the Poirei king is believed to have been killed in the war between the Poireis and the Keges. During the reign of Khongtekcha as recorded in the accounts like Ningthourol Lambuba, that 763 Keges were killed. And there is also an interregnum of 11 years following the death of Khongtekcha and his immediate successor Keirencha. This interregnum may be accounted as an aftermath of the war.

Oinu Seng Raja was probably succeeded by Thangjing Koirel Lai chief of Moirang ( Mahui ) tribe after an interregnum of some years. Thangjing Koirel Lai seems to have been invited by the Keges as evident from the account that he was received at Ngangkha by a Kege named Haomu son of a lady named Irai Leima. It is during his days that the Keges and the Moirangs were united politically. Thus the amalgamated principality became known as Kege-Moirang principality, and later it became simply known as Moirang and further the Keges appear to have evolved as a confederating unit. The inhabitants of the Kege principality were Moriyas, Tibeto-Burman Mayangs and Kege proper.

Thangjing Koirel Lai seems to be an adventurer. Before coming down to the valley the Moirangs settled on the hills now known as the Thangjing hill. As discussed in the section on Moirang, Thangjing Koirel Lai used to visit the Bangal principality at Lamangdong on horse back. After the clash between the Poirei and Kege he moved down to the valley at about 1270 A D. As stated above he was received at Ngangkha now known as Ngangkha-rawai by Haomu the Kege. His tentative date is c. 1270-90 A.D. It may be

noted that Moirang is a Ngangoi word for the Marem name Moiram given to the southern part of Imphal valley.

It seems Thanjing Koirel Lai was succeeded by one man named Nganingshing. It is not known whether he was a Lai tribe or not, but appears to be a Lai tribe. He is also known as Nganingshing Atengba. It is very likely that Thangjing Koirel Lai was posthumously given the titular name 'Purik Lai Ponglen Hanba' meaning 'Ancestor of the Lai tribe, the chief of men'. But in Moirang Ningthourol Lambuba Purik Lai Ponglen Hanba is entered as another ruler. In Sagei Salairol he is not shown. The tentative date of Nganingshing Atengba is c. 1290-1305 A.D.

Nganingshing Atengba was succeeded by Purik Lai Hamcha Thaba. The spelling of Hamcha is also found to have been written as Hamsa. It is supposed that he was given the titular name Phang Phang Ponglen Hanba. But in Moirang Ningthourol Lambuba, Phang Phang Ponglen Hanba is entered as another ruler. His tentative date is c. 1305-15 A.D.

Purik Lai Hamcha Thaba was succeeded by Purik Lai Narong Lai-likshuba according to Sagei Salairol. But in Moirang Ningthourol Lambuba one more ruler named Purik Lai Yoircmba is found between Purik Lai Hamcha Thaba and Purik Lai Narong Lai-likshuba. The tentative date of Purik Lai Narong Lai-likshuba is c. 1315-30 A.D.

After Purik Lai Narong Lai-likshuba the two accounts namely Sagei Salairol and Moirang Ningthourol Lambuba contradict each other about the successors. According to Sagei Salairol he was succeeded by Phang Phang, Sumut, Mayang Loikenba, Iwang Pheidenba, Chaoba Soupon-nganba, Laikachengba Ura Khundouba and Sana-rakkha in succession while in Moirang Ningthourol Lambuba he was succeeded by Purik Lai Mayamba, Sunu Charik Lai, Phang Phang, Iwang Telheiba, Iwang Laikacheng, Purik Lai Ura Khundouba and Sana-rakkha in succession. So it is difficult to say who actually succeeded Narong. The tentative date of the of successor of Purik Lai Narong Lai-likshuba is c. 1330-40 A.D.

However Sana-rakkha is the seventh successor of Narong according to Moirang Ningthourol Lambuba with spelling Sana-rakhuwa and the eighth successor according to Sagei Salairol with spelling Sana-rakhwa. Taking as the seventh successor it is seen that Sana-rakkha is the 10th successor of Thangjing Koirel Lai according to the deducted chronology, and taking as an approximate yard stick the average reigning period of the Poirei kings, it is seen that Sana-rakkha falls as a contemporary person of either Iwanthaba, or Thawanthaba of the Poireis. The average reigning period of this period of the Poirei history appears to be very low. It is of about 7 years. Hence taking a little higher value we can reasonably say that Sana-rakkha lived at a period about the middle of the 14th century A.D.

Lai Ching-khu Telheiba is the 4th successor of Sana-rakkha according to Sagei Salairol and the 13th successor according to the Moirang Ningthourol Lambuba. There is a historical account mentioned in both Cheitharol Kumbaba and Ningthourol Lambuba that princess Yoiren Tompokpi the daughter of Lai Ching-khu Telheiba's younger brother was married to Thangbi Lanthaba ( c 1381-91 A.D. ) the Poirei king with a great episode. Evidently four or thirteen kings had to rule from about 1350 A.D. which is a span of about 30-40 years. Hence the average ruling period comes to about 10 years or 3 years. The period under consideration appears to be politically calm and the Kege-Moirang flourished during this period in art and literature, and hence 4 kings ruling for a period of 30-40 years is more reasonable than 13 kings ruling the same period. It is therefore more reasonable to accept Lai Ching-khu Telheiba as the 3rd or 4th successor of Sana-rakkha rather than the 13th successor. One more difficulty is that Sagei Salairol does not mention the sources from which the genealogical chart is prepared.

Thus in our reconstructed genealogy Lai Ching-khu Telheiba is found to be the 14th successor of Thangjing Koirel Lai the founder of the Moirang principality. Thangjing Koirel Lai and Keirencha ( c 1271-81 A.D. ) the Poirei king were contemporary persons.

There are 16 successors from Keirenoha to Moramba (c 1370-81 A.D.) the father of Thangbi Lanthaba. The matching of the 14th descendant of one line with the 16th descendant of the other is quite reasonable.

The successors or the successive rulers of the Kege-Moirang principality beginning from Thangjing Koirel Lai is tentatively given below : (1) Thangjing Koirel Lai, (2) Nganingshing Atengba, (3) Purik Lai Hamcha Thaba, (4) Purik Lai Narong Lai-likshuba, (5) Sunu Charik Lai, (6) Phang Phang, (7) Iwang Telheiba, (8) Iwang Laikachang, (9) Purik Lai Ura Khundouba, (10) Sana-rakkha, (11) Shonglen Lanthaba, (12) Khokkei Lanthaba, (13) Ura Kongyangba and (14) Ching-khu Telheiba

Who was Sana-rakkha ? The origin of the name Sanā-rakkha does not indicate a Lai or any other Tai or Tibeto-Burman origin. It is a mixed word of Aryan and some other tribes. The word must have come from the Moriya tribes. So either Sanā-rakkhā was a Lai tribe who acquired the name or he himself was a Moriya ruler. The reference of Moriya tribe is also found in the Moirang chronicle, Moirang Ningthourol Lambuba, one Moriya who is described as 'Mori loushingba' meaning 'Moriya the wise' in the said text. Here Mori is another Manipuri form of Moriya besides Muwa. We have investigated the pattern of the name Sanā-rakkhā in earlier sections and found to be a Sakiyan formation. Hence this name is Moriya origin.

Sanā-rakkhā must have been a very popular figure. It is believed from the name of Sanā-rakkhā that the adoption of the name *Sana* to princes, princesses and other royal descendants of Poirei as a title came into use. When addressing a prince or any other royal descendants by a junior person in age or of humble origin, he used to address as *Sanakha* or *Sanakhya* or *Sa-akhwa*, all are the derivatives of Sana-rakkha. Some scholars however interpret the address as *Sana-khuya-kha* meaning literally 'as humble as the bottom of thy feet'. The elders of noble origin usually address *Sana-ibungo* and the modern style is *Ibungo-sana*. In a likewise manner these elders usually address other royal female descendants

as *Ibem-sana* but to the crowned princess as *Wangol sana*. All persons of humble origin and nobles while showing courtesy as well addressed only as *Sana-ibema*. The original word of the Poireis for addressing prince and other male royal descendants by the noble origin was *Ningthem*. The word *Ningthem* continued to be used, and it is a living word and has wide application. It has become a vocabulary and there is no English equivalent of it. The mother addresses her male child as *Imagi ningthem* meaning 'ningthem of the mother'. Here *ningthem* expresses something precious with tender emotion as a widow queen feels her son who has become a king. From about the latter part of the 16th century A.D. the word *Sana* is found to have been used by the Poireis as a prefix of the name like *Sana Langmeirembi*, *Sana Wapihal* etc., but in modern form it has changed to a suffix form like *Thambal-sana*, *Radhe-sana*, *Ombi-sana*, *Kala-sana* etc. In addition to it another prefix *Rajkumar* or *Rajkumari* has been added in modern period like *Rajkumar Thambal-sana*, *Rajkumari Ombi-sana* etc.

Some *Ningthemchas* use to address their fathers by the word *Pabung-kha*. This word may be disintegrated into *Pa-baung-kha* where *Pa* means father, *baung* seems to be a Burmanised style of an honorific word possibly of Sakiyan origin like *baung* of *Shing-ta-baung* the son of Poireiton and *Twat-ta-baung* also called *Twat-ta-baung* who is supposed to be one of the ancestors of the Pagan rulers of Burma from whose line the great *Anawratha* descended, and *kha* is either the last syllable of *Sana-rakkha* or the Mongol word *kha* meaning 'great'. The Mongols were active in Burma in the 13th century A.D. There is a word *boung* in Austro formation meaning 'to dig up', but this does not suggest the meaning carried by the above word. Hence *Pabung-kha* may be interpreted to mean 'The great father'.

The tentative date of *Sana-rakkha* is c. 1340-50 A.D. The tentative dates of other successors may be given as follows: *Songlen Lanthaba* c. 1350-65 A.D., *Kokkei Lanthaba* c. 1365-70 A.D., *Ura Kongyangba* c. 1370-80 A.D. But one point to be noted is that in *Moirang Ningthourol Lambuba Songlen Lanthaba* is described to be the father of *Lai Ching-khu Telheiba*.

The most notable successor of Sana-rakkha is Lai Ching-khu Telheiba who is believed to be the son of Ura Kongyangba. It is during his reign that the Poireis invaded Moirang. Both the accounts namely Cheitharol Kumbaba and Ningthourol Lambuba mention the attack of the Poireis. The cause of the invasion is given in the text Ningthourol Lambuba as follows. The Poirei prince Thangbi Lanthaba was the son of † Moiramba and he was the only son of his mother. So his mother gave him the name Yoiren Tompok-pa a masculine form of Yoiren Tompok, where Yoiren means something 'full of life and top magnetic personality' and Tompok means 'born all alone' or 'the only child'. By that time there was a beautiful princess who was also the only child of the royal family of Moirang born by the younger brother of Lai Ching-khu Telheiba. As she was also born all alone, she was given the name Yoiren Tompok-pi a feminine form of Yoiren Tompok. It is likely that her real name is Thoibi. When the Poirei king Thangbi Lanthaba learnt about the princess, he wanted to marry her and sent two of his nobles, namely Haoba Lamlang Khamlou Laiton and Wangkhei Lourengbam for the negotiation. Accordingly the two nobles arrived in the court of the Moirang king, and with all formalities the two nobles approached the king for the hand of his daughter. The Moirang king gave a very evasive answer and said that he had neither a daughter nor a son to succeed him. It is not known what was the cause of annoyance in that issue. None of the texts gives hints on it. Thus at the very onset, the negotiation broke down. In the mean time princess Yoiren Tompok-pi managed to hear the talk stealthily, and knowing that the negotiation was at a deadlock, she escaped from the house and was found awaiting the two nobles secretly on their way back to Poirei. She met the two nobles and expressed her frank desire to marry the Poirei king. She also said that the unhappy incidence was due to a misunderstanding with her uncle king and invited the Poirei king to invade Moirang on the fifth day and rescue her. She also gave a secret route through which the Poirei forces could enter Moirang.

Accordingly on the appointed day Thangbi Lanthaba invaded and subdued Moirang. Thus princess Yoiren Tompok-pi got married



to prince Yoiren Tompok-pa and fulfilled her desire at the cost of the prestige of Moirang. By the time of Lai Ching-khu Telheiba the Moirang principality flourished in art and literature. The Moirangs lived quite peacefully. It became an asylum of fugitives. Neither Lai Ching-khu Telheiba nor his younger brother had any issue to succeed the throne. It is therefore likely that the ruling line of Moirang passed on to some other families. It is not known with certainty who succeeded them. The tentative date of Lai Ching-khu Telheiba is c 1380-95 A.D.

Since the time of Lai Ching-khu Telheiba upto the time of Khelei Nungnang Telheiba the noted Moirang ruler in whose reign there was a tussle over the demarcation of boundary between the Moirang principality and the Poirei kingdom ruled by his nephew king Jai Singh (1763-93 A.D.), some 8 rulers are found in Sagei Salairol which is too little. The time span is of about four centuries. Other manuscripts so far available with us too describe the successors in a chaotic order, however this much seems to be certain that three prominent rulers are in regular succession. They are Yoiremba, Punshi Khurenchanba and Sanahongba. The time span shows at least some 20 rulers ought to have been in that period. Comparing different manuscripts it is found that some 20 rulers are there and that too cannot be put into regular succession. They are Thanga Iphellanthaba, Ithai Koiremaba, Chaphaba, Punshiba, Khongjomba, Yoiremaba, Punshi Khurenchanba, Sanahongba, Leilanthaba, Charangkomba, Sana Ponglenkhomba, Yoiremaba, Chakpa Pallungamba, Laiyingsem Telheiba, Higu Sanaba, Hebu Sanalamdaba, Koiba Lalnga Sanaba, Hebu Tensuba, Khutngam Tensuba, and Khelei Nungnang Telheiba. This needs further investigation.

## THE KHAMBA-THOIBI

The most popularly known romantic mini-epic Khamba-Thoibi or Moirang Thoibi was developed in the first half of the 15th century A.D. It was developed as a historical novel in a lyrical form sung by artists. Possibly the novel was adopted when the musical instrument *Penā* was invented or developed. *Penā* seems to be a Moriya word for *Veenā* and unlike *Veenā*, *Penā* is a stringed instrument like violin. The sounds produced by *Penā* work better in low frequencies and hence are well matched with bass productions.

The novel was first developed orally and transferred from mouth to mouth. Any part of it was not written down till the 20th century A.D. More and more events have possibly been added from time to time. The scene of *Kaophaba* is believed to have been added in the 19th century A.D. The person who developed the novel is not known. He must have been a poet of Kege-Moirang who lived in the first half of the 15th century A.D.

The story is based on some life events of Yoiren Tompok-pi the beautiful and only daughter of Lai Ching-khu Telheiba's younger brother. As discussed in earlier sections Lai Ching-khu Telheiba the king of Moirang had no issue. So Yoiren Tompok-pi was the only child of the royal family of Moirang. The beauty, activities etc. of Yoiren Tompok-pi were perhaps the topic of gossip of the common people of Kege-Moirang. There is every possibility of Yoiren Tompok-pi having some affairs with some local boys in her early adolescence. But the marriage to such individuals was probably not wanted by her parents and uncle king. There is also no impossibility of her parents and uncle king bestowing her to some nobles which she did not like. In such a situation chances so happened that prince Thangbi Lanthaba also called Yoiren Tompok-pa married Yoiren Tompok-pi with a great episode. When Yoiren Tompok-pi was married there would have been talks and rumours for and against her because the marriage was associated

with a great episode. With this background when all the living characters like Lai Ching-khu, Thangbi Lanthaba, Yoiren Tompok-pi etc. died the novel was developed. The novel has so much impressed the people of Manipur that most people take it as a real history.

The main theme of the novel is centred around a love affair of Yoiren Tompok-pi also called Thoibi in the novel with an orphan named Amudon of noble origin who belonged to a Kham(ba) tribe which amalgamated with the Khumans. Since Amudon belonged to a Kham tribe he was also called Kham-pa (Kham-ba). The other name of Amudon is Sājouba. He had one elder sister whose real name is not found except the tribe name given to the females of Kham tribe. Hence she was commonly known as Kham-nu. Amudon was a brave, strong and righteous man. There was a villain named Kongyāngba who belonged to a Nongbal tribe. Kongyangba is also known by his tribe's name. In that novel Nongbal means Kongyangba. The father of Yoiren Tompok-pi, who was the crowned prince and younger brother of Ching-khu Telheiba wanted to give his daughter in marriage to Kongyangba the Nongbal who had already several wives. But Yoiren Tompok-pi never accepted the proposal. The crowned prince in connivance with Kongyangba planned to ruin Amudon the Kham tribe even inflicting various physical tortures. The crowned prince on seeing his daughter's mind was not changed exiled his only daughter at Tumu (Tamu) under the charge of the administrative officer of Tuntu known as *Tumu Lakpa* who belonged to a Senbi-Kabow tribe or Moriya origin. That too failed to reconcile his daughter in his proposal. Thus all attempts brought no fruit to reconcile. At last chances so happened that both Kongyangba and Amudon had to assault a tiger that became a man eater by killing an unfortunate girl named Kunjamala brought up by a step mother, who had been entrusted to ward off birds alone in a paddy field close to jungles by the step mother. The assault was a real test for the two, Kongyangba though strong became a victim of the man eater. Amudon and Yoiren Tompok-pi got married, but the marriage did

not last long. It so happened one evening that Amudon under the guise of a stranger entered the house to tease his beloved, but Yoizea Tompokpi took it to be a real stranger threw her knife which pierced through the heart of her beloved and died on the spot. On finding that the stranger was none but her beloved she committed suicide. Thus the story ended.

The mini-epic character of the novel lies in the fact that every character in it has a long and unique accounts involving valour, galantry, sympathy, love, hatred, nobility which are by themselves great stories. All these accounts are grouped as *Moirang Kangleiroi* of which the romantic story of Khamba-Thoibi is a part.

This historical novel is a mirror of the Manipuri culture of later mediaeval and early modern period. It reflects social setup, economic condition, administrative system, judiciary system, concept of the ideal king, social heirarchy: nobles, mediocres, commoners, etc. It also reflects in the field of art and literature, fine arts like dance and music, weaving and embroidery, appreciation of beauty of flowers, decorum of court and courtesy, moral and ethics etc. It gives accounts in games and sports too.

The society was basically of a feudal setup. The common people lived in poverty toiling hard for their livelihood. Lai Ching-khu Telheiba is depicted as an ideal king who did not even spare to punish his own younger brother the crowned prince to prison terms for involvement in a crime in which Kongyangba assaulted Amudon with his men. The wisdom of Chaoba the *Nongthomba* a title of a noble in charge of judiciary is shown with maturity.

In Lai-haroba function there is one item known as *Lei-langba* in which the leaders of a *pana* would collect flowers of different varieties usually of orchids that bloom in wilderness and display flower shows in competition among the different *panas*. Prizes were awarded for the display of the most beautiful flowers.

In games and sports there were games like *Kaang*, *Mukna*, *Kaangjei* etc. All these games appear to be of indigenous origin. *Kaang* according to Manipur account was developed during the reign

of Loitongba (c. 1336-1346 A.D.). It is mentioned in Ningthourol Lambuba that one day Loitongba with his noble Nongthol Tengmai Thinba and other servants went to a hill and collected some seeds of Kaang creeper. The *Kaang* seeds are flat and round of about 7 cm. in diameter and about 1 cm in thickness and are found in pods. With these *Kaang* seeds they started playing by throwing it. But some scholars feel that the playing of *Kaang* is a pre-historic Indian game as mentioned in the Mahabharata some similar pattern of games and Manipur continued to preserve it with modifications and innovations. *Muknā* is a kind of wrestling. *Kaangjei* is a kind of hockey game in which *muknā* is involved.

In dance and music the period is shown with remarkable development. A dancing system known as Khamba-Thoibi dance appears to have developed from about the period of the novel. The part of the dance performed by Khamba is shown with masculine movements of potential vigour, and in a contrast with that the part of the dance performed by Thoibi is embodied with soft, subtle and rhythmic movements as the fair sex commands. It is a duet dance and sometimes it is also singularly performed. When the dance of Thoibi is performed singularly it is called *Leima-jagor*. The accompanying music too is soft and melodious usually accompanied by *pena* and drum. The lyrics found today appear to be a later version as the language is a modern one. A typical lyric as found today is given below.

*Heirāng-gōi-ni-da*

*Chānaba hei-ni-da*

*Sibu thoi-na haoba heidi*

*Chindamba hei-ni-da*

*Sābi lao lao chat-si lao*

*Kalakpa yāmmi kanjaoba yāmmi*

*Māng-da thāro lao*

*Mamāng leikāi thambāl sāt-le*

*Khoim-u-na illey khoirāba*

*etc, etc.*

The costume, as found to-day in Khamba-Thoibi dance, there, might have been innovations of modern craftsmanship, but basically this was the costume used at about the time of the novel.

The Manipuri dance Rash Leela, one of the finest dances of the world seems to have been composed in the 18th century A.D. when the Bengal school of Vaisnavism based on *dwaitabad* reached Imphal valley through Orissa probably Puri during the reign of king Jay Singh alias Rajarshi Bhagyachandra, since the dance recitals of Rash Leela are based on the rear combination of two emotions *bhakti* and *prem* of Radha and the Gopikas for Lord Sri Krishna which the only Bengal school of Vaisnavism exhibits. The concept was expounded by the saint Gouranga in the 15th century A.D. Sri Gouranga is not taken as a saint but a real incarnation of Lord Krishna by the Vaisnavite *bhaktas*. Quite paradoxically the Bengal school of Vaisnavism does not exist in Bengal but it exists in Manipur. Since it was developed from Gour Desh a state in old Bengal, the religion is also known as Gouriya Vaisnavism.

The dance composition is purely from indigenous materials but the songs in that dance recital called *nat sankirtana* seems to have certain image of external source possibly Oriya or Ahom on indigenous components. It does not have the image of Bengal *kirtan* which was known as *Manohar-shei* later changed to *Manor-shai*. On the other hand it seems there is the image of *nat sankirtana* specially sung in *bhangî pareng* of Rash Leela on Rabindra Sangeet. Now *nat sankirtana* itself emerged to a classical form of music with complicated *tals* beaten by drum called *pung*.

The above investigations clearly reveal that there were giant scholars in the field of fine arts like dance and music in the 18th century A.D. in the court of kings.

The Khamba-Thoibi dance was usually performed in the Lai-haraoba festival. More details on Lai-haraoba are discussed in subsequent parts. Lai-haraoba was a platform for culture. Every

man and woman used to dance irrespective of ages, more particularly from small boys and girls to middle aged people. Prior to the development of this dance, the dances were performed by the female priest of Lei-hou tribe. The dance was known as *Lei-hou maibi jagoi* meaning 'Lei-hou priestess dance'. Now Lei-Hou-maibidance remains as the ritual part of the function Lai-haraoba and Khamba-Thoibi dance becomes included as a cultural programme.

In the art of weaving and embroidery Thoibi is known for the skill she possessed. The silk cloth she had woven is described as '*Paira khudāp, sandokla sarāsan*'. The literal meaning is 'only a handful when one holds and spread wide open when set free.' The semi-proverb here indicates that the cloth woven by Thoibi was so fine that a long and broad cloth could be squeezed to a handful one. The best yarn used by that period was *Kabrang* the finest variety of silk spun out of the cocoon of *Kabrang teel* or *Leima teel* which feeds on *Kabrang-chāk* (mulberry). This variety of silk can be spun to any degree of fineness. However for general purpose about 20-30 count fineness was used. There is another inferior variety of silk from silk worms which feed on Kege plants. This variety of silk is known as *Muga* and all silk cloths whether of *Muga* or *Kabrang* are called *Muga-fi*. It is believed that these Kege plants were named from the fact that Kege used to grow them and to rear a variety of silk worm on these plants. This variety of silk worm is known as *Kege teel* meaning Kege worm. The name *Kege teel* is also derived from the fact that the Kege used to rear them. Unlike mulberry trees, Kege plants are biennials with broad foliage multicostate leaves. There is another variety of plant known as Ava-Kege (castor plant) whose stem is more woody than that of Kege plants. It is not known whether this plant was used for rearing any variety of worm or not. The word *Kabrang* is derived from *Kabow-lang* meaning 'Kabow-thread'. It is mentioned in the sections on Kege and Senbi-Kabow that the ancestral home of these tribes were central and southern China. They were forced to move to the south with the expansion of Imperial China. It is therefore certain that the culture of rearing silk worm came to

this kingdom from China<sup>1</sup>. It is most likely a border design known as *Moirang-fi halpa* began to develop from about the time of this novel. This design is unique by itself. The thread of the flying shuttle is interlocked with the thread of another shuttle usually dyed with other colour working for the border and the finished product appears to be a single thread differing in colour tone only. The type of loom employed by that period is the loin type. The present fly shuttle type of loom is developed in the beginning of the 17th century A. D. The fly shuttle was introduced by the Muhammadans in the year 1606 A. D. during the reign of Khagemba. Hence the name of the shuttle was given Pāngal-tem where Pāngal means Muhammadans from Bengal and similarly the name of the fly-shuttle loom was also given the name Pāngal-iyong, later shortened as Pāng-yong.

Besides these reflections, the scholar or the poet of the novel depicts the characters in such a way that the listeners were aroused to have sympathy for Amudon Khamba of his polite and virtuous behaviour while on the other hand anger and indignation were aroused on Kongyangba for his vanity and atrocity.

It has so much impressed the people of Manipur that Moirang Thoibi becomes a symbol of beauty, grace and chastity. All the sayings and characters have become proverbs. In modern society of Manipur an exclusively beautiful girl is said, 'She is a Moirang Thoibi', and girls who are the only children of their parents and whom their parents care so much are also called 'Moirang Thoibi'.

1. The culture and weaving of silk have been proclaimed in China from a remote past. Empress Si Lang Chi who not only encouraged the culture of silk worm *bombyx mori*, is said to have developed the process of reeling from the cocoons at about 2640 B.C. which was kept as a closely guarded secret for some 3000 years. European countries particularly Greece and Rome started importing silk cloths from China from about the first and second century A.D. But death was the penalty for exporting silk worm eggs from China. In the 6th century A.D. raw silk was brought from China to Europe. At about 550 A.D. two missionaries to China succeeded in smuggling to Constantinople both eggs of silk worm and seeds of mulberry tree and thus the silk culture reached Europe.



The unsuccessful candidate in courting girls is said 'He is a Nongbal'. The commander-in-chief of the Moirang king was a man named Thonglen. The novel depicts him to be quick tempered, immediately to wage war and much vocal with the slightest provocation. Such type of people are described as Thonglen and so on.

Besides the historical accounts, this historical novel clearly reflects that there was a high standard of civilization in the Kege-Moirang principality in the 14th and 15th century A.D. being a synthesis of the composite culture of Moriya the Chakkha, Ngangoi the Anga (Nga), Kege the Chinese, Lai the ancient feudal lords of Tai and Senbi the Siamese Tai; and the standard of civilization of Poiris which included the Luwang, Mangang, Nongbal (later called Angom) etc. was comparatively lower than that of the Kege-Moirang, however they became politically more and more powerful. On the other hand the Kege-Moirang was reduced to be a confederation of petty principalities of Senbi-Kabow, Moirang etc. which ultimately brought about the weakening of power and frequently subdued each confederating unit by the Poiris. Even the Poiris attempted to kidnap the wife of the Senbi-Kabow chief during the reign of Ningthoukhomba in the middle of the 15th century A.D., and when the attempt failed they barbarously killed the lady and beheaded. Because of the frequent barbarous assaults of the Poiris the civilization of the Kege-Moirang principality was brought to a standstill, however the impact of the culture of the Kege-Moirang had undoubtedly boosted up the standard of civilization of the Poiris. It is often found in the history that civilization is generally destroyed by the barbarians. The Poiris kings began to adopt the titular name *Lai Ningthou* of the Kege-Moirang from about the beginning of the 17th century A.D., more precisely from the year 1608 A.D. this *Lai* title was first officially adopted by Khagemba<sup>2</sup> and the mode of naming by the patronymic word *Sana* to the princes and princesses of the Kege-Moirang

2. Cheitharol Kumbaba, published by the Manipuri Sahitya Parishad, page-33.

from Sanā-rakkhē onwards was borrowed and adopted by the Poirei princes and princesses. The son of Khagamba (1597-1662 A.D.) is found to have adopted the word and called Sana Wapihal. Now this patronymic word *Sana* is exclusively applied to the descendants of Nongta (Pakhangba) and the Moirang ruling descendants are deprived of it. The Kege-Moirang culture of *Lai haraoba* a mixed culture of Saivism and Lai culture also began to be adopted by the Poireis, however they continued to preserve the honour of Thangching Koirel Lai. The Poireis did not start any *Lai haraoba* before the *Lai haraoba* function of Lai Thangching. The Poireis were called Poirei-Meitei by the Kege-Moirang. Gradually the culture of northern Imphal valley which was a mixture of pre-Buddhist rather Vedic culture and the Nāga cult, and the culture of southern Imphal valley got fused together into one culture known as the Manipuri culture.

The culture and civilization of the Kege-Moirang were the living civilization of the ancient kingdom of Manipur that flourished from about the 2nd century B.C. in the valley later known as Kabow Valley now transferred to Burma by Jawaharlal Nehru the late prime minister of India.

We have seen the standard of the Manipuri culture and civilization that existed in the 14th century A.D. Such standard of civilization cannot be achieved within a fortnight, and indeed Rome was not built in a day. It must have a long history. The background of this culture clearly shows that the Manipuri culture is the lone survivor of the Mauryan culture blended with Lai culture.

## THE LAI-HARAObA

Originally Lai-Haraoba was a festival of 'merriments of the Lai tribe'. Though it originated from Lai tribes, this culture began gradually to spread to other tribes. Every tribe will have a festival of *Haraoba* meaning 'merriments', which lasted for several days. When the tribes like Marem, Hao etc. were small it was said as Marem-haraoba, Hao-haraoba etc. In Lai-haraoba festival the Lai tribes used to invoke their ancestors by chanting hymns and offered food and other material like flowers, cloths etc. They prayed for their fertility. In imitation of this practice other tribes also began to worship their ancestors with Haraoba function. It may be noted that the other tribes used to worship their ancestors simply as *Apokpa khurumba* usually with feast known *Chak-long katpa*. When a tribe became numerous, different ancestors began to be worshipped by the different clans. With increasing population the meaning of a particular ancestor ceases its application. For example Lai-khurembi is supposed to be the ancestor of the Poireis being the wife of Thongaren, but it has lost its meaning and became a common goddess.

It is believed that the first form of Lai-haraoba started with the worship of Thangjing Koirel Lai, the Lai tribe or a king belonging to a Lai tribe. It was done in Kege-Moirang principality. When Thangjing Koirel Lai was raised to the status of a god the name Lai had changed its original application, it became a vocabulary for god by superseding the early words like Ching-U, Khoiyam, Khoimom etc. For example the word *teksi* is originally for pig but it has undergone a change and by now it is a word meaning 'small girl as fat as a pig'. The use of the word Lai for god became popular because of its association, and by this date it stands as the surviving language or word whereas Ching-U, Khoimom, Khoiyam etc become obsolete. There is a convention that

the celebration of *Lai-haraoba* for the different ancestors which later became known as *Umang-Lais* cannot start before the *Lai-haraoba* celebration of *Thangjing Koirel Lai*. The shortened form or name of *Thangjing Koirel Lai* is *Thangjing* or *Lai-Thangjing*. This is a clear indication that *Lai-haraoba* began for the first time on this valley with the worship of *Thangjing Koirel Lai*.<sup>1</sup>

The name *Lai* is found in most of *Lai* tribes like *Lai-khurembi*, *Lai-Ningthou Khori-phaba*, *Lai Ching-khu Telheiba*. In case of *Lai-Ningthou Khoriphaba* which means *Lai-king-Khoriphaba*, the word *Ningthou* (*Ingthou* in old language) clearly indicates that *Khoriphaba* was a king who was either a *Lai* tribe or king of *Lai* tribe. The myths of *Khoriphaba* does not indicate he was the 'king of the gods' had the word *Lai* been god. Later the word *Lai-Ningthou* became a vocabulary to mean something great king and the *Poirai* kings also adopted the word erroneously e.g. *Lai-Ningthou Pamheiba* etc. by superseding the earlier word *Meiding-ngu* for the *Poirai* kings. When the cult of *Sanamahi* developed in the early part of the 16th century A.D. the word or title was also given to *Sanamahi* like *Lai-Ningthou Sanamahi* and by now the title itself is known for *Sanamahi*. So if there is only the word '*Lai-Ningthou*' it means *Sanamahi*. Here none of the above persons was a *Lai* tribe, nor they were the kings of *Lai* tribes. However we cannot take it

1. The invocation of *Umang Lai* usually starts with the immersion of a packet called *khayom* in water. *Khayom* is a packet containing uncooked rice, sometimes with black sesame seeds, whole egg or sometime the pointed end of the egg is perforated and pieces of gold and silver are inserted known as *konyal chanba* along with three or five or seven buds of *langthrei* with stem. The articles are then packed by means of the upper portion of the plantain leaf called *laaton* or sometimes by *leihoura*.

The priestess then rings her bell with hymns and it would be assumed that the invoked spirit would move along the string stretching from water holding by the priestess to a man standing on the bank of water holding a packet containing rice, flower and *langthrei* and sit inside the packet. Then the prince priestess would dance in praise of the invoked spirit of that ancestor or that particular *Umang Lai* and the whole posse would move to the site of the shrine where *Lai-haraoba* is to celebrate. This whole process is called *ikouba* or *ikonkhampa*.

a mistake but a course of history and evolution of language and vocabularies.

Different spots of land inside or outside a village had been preserved for the deity of the ancestors and they became known as Umang Lai compound where Lai-haraoka is celebrated. Prominent female ancestors like Lai-khu-rembi, Konthoujam Lai-rembi etc. also began to be worshipped mingled with Saivism and the Umang-Lai Lai-rembis began to be personified with Devi. Thus a mixed culture of Saivism and remnants of Confucious culture began to develop which took another turn with the manifestation of Tantric culture. It may also be noted that some of the old shrines of Siva and Devi became gradually replaced by the Lai ancestors and became shrines of them. But some of the shrines of Devi e.g. Hiyangthang Lairembi continued to exist till this date without associating with any one of the Lai ancestors.

Thus Lai-haraoka became a part of the religion of this valley i.e. Imphal plateau and the religion too seems to represent the religious outlook of the 10th century A D. Burma where the religion began to mingle with various heathen growths and debased Tantric system which is a mixture of black magic, witchcraft and Siva worship.

They developed priesthoods usually female priest or priestess called *Maibi*. Along with the development of priesthood rituals to be followed were also formulated. The image of witchcraft is seen from the fact that the *Maibis* propagate the so-called *Lai-paos*. More details may be seen in the section on religion.

The rituals of Lai-rembi in Lai-haraoka function specially those of invocation and installation are similar in both forms and spirit

The packet in which the spirit of that ancestor or that Umang Lai is supposed to have resided is kept on a dias and offers like *heikal* which included *kas manam naba* meaning sweet scented fruits, *leikal* which included *lei manam naba* meaning sweet scented flowers along with *athum-ahao* meaning sweat meats are made by the priestess with chanting of hymns and ringing of bells. When all these processes are over the *haraoka* function may start.

with that of Devi, but the ceremonial parts have a different outlook. The afternoon function is in short a programme of dances and other cultural items. Besides the Khamba-Thoibi and Leima-jagoi dances, several dance dramas have been staged at present depicting events of early period. One such dance drama entitled *Moirang Chaoba and helloy taret* may be mentioned. Ningthourol Lambuba narrates an episode stated to have taken place in the *Hayee-chak* (Satya Yuga) in which Mungyang Chaoba collected the cloths of the seven daughters of Sararen. It may be noted that Sararen is the name of a chief of a tribe with strong Lai element and generally it is confused with the word sky-god. The full name of this chief is Haoba Sararen and seven is also an interpolated mystic number. It is stated that, while the girls were playing in water of a stream at Mungyang (Mong Yang) leaving behind their cloths on the bank, Mungyang Chaoba took away all the cloths. When girls saw it, they requested Mungyang Chaoba to return the cloths but Mungyang Chaoba refused, and however at last he detained the youngest of the girls whom he took to wife and returned the cloths. In the above dance-drama Mungyang Chaoba is mispronounced as Moirang Chaoba. It may be mentioned here that the city of Mungyang or the name came into existence from about the middle of the 13th century A.D. The first city with the suffix Mung (Mong) in northern Burma was Mungkhong (Mong Kwang) which came into existence from the year 1215 A.D. and other Mungs meaning cities were subsequent to the above date. Mungkhong was established by Samlungfa son of the Mong Mao king Blak Kham Deng and his eldest son Sukanpha expanded his territory in Northern Burma for the first time by the Mau Shans and different *mungs* were established after defeating the Sakiyan rulers. Each Mung was put under the charge of a Chao Hpa which the Burmese used to pronounce *Sawbwa* and the Manipuris pronounced it *Chao-ba*. Hence Chao Hpa of Mungyang is Mungyang Chaoba of the Manipuri source. It is therefore seen that the above mentioned episode cannot at any rate be earlier than the second half of the 13th century A.D. It may also be mentioned that after the death of

Sukanpha the Mau Shan *sawbwas* of the Tagaung countries were expelled by Narathihapate and he even invaded Yun-nan. The other name Mungyang is Mohmyin and is located a little south of Mogaung in the upper Irrawaddy valley.

But the closing part of the day's function in the evening a distinctly different ritual called *Lai-pou-chongba* in which the *maibis* usually talk much slang with vulgar dances mimicking sexual gestures and other amorous poses somewhat similar to that of the Bihu dances of the Ahoms is observed indicating an image of the Tai culture. This part of the function is performed only in the evening before retirement possibly to arouse sexual impetus to the onlookers which in turn could give rise to fertility. The modern trend however is that the *maibis* talk less slang and behave less vulgar. The ritual reflects that people wanted to increase their population in contrast with the modern family planning and birth control programmes released through the different media such as T.V., radio etc. which are also equally vulgar from the twentieth century perspective. The fertility cult is also seen in Saivism. Women folk usually pay homage to the Siva-linga the reproductive organ of Siva for their fertility and good progeny. The present form of worship does not show any vulgarity befitting with time. However if we move backward all fertility cults are seen to be vulgar. There are legends of the violent capability of the reproductive organ of Siva.

Such vulgarities are also seen where the temple walls and entrances specially of Siva temples are decorated with erotic paintings, carvings and statues showing sexual unions. Even to this date these articles are preserved for their artistic value. In *Agni Purana* it is stated, *mithunairabibhusayed* which literally means the doorway of a shrine should be decorated with *mithunas* meaning sexual unions, and often found to have described the sentence *mithunena mahayoni mama tulyo na samsayah* supposed to have been said by Siva.

## THE RELIGION

The concept of God seems to be man's invention out of necessity ; when human society was primitive physically stronger individuals did whatever they liked on their physically weaker brethren, and in order to control the behaviour, the physically weaker but more intelligent individuals developed the idea of the existence of a hypothetical person who is all powerful, who is invisible, who is found everywhere, who is capable of doing harm on those who did against his wish, and whom they called God. The physically stronger people were compelled to believe in the existence of God in the shape of human being as they were unable to refute the concept.

As time passed on with the concept of God, different codes of conduct for peaceful co-existence had been developed as the wish of God the so-called formal religion. The relation between human being and God, the mysteries of life, the theories of birth and rebirth, the existence of heaven and hell, were also philosophized even with contradictions and then followed the rigorous rituals. The men who expounded such philosophic theories were regarded the *avatar*, incarnation, son of God, prophet etc.

The concept of the Creator and the created began to have its firm footing in almost all societies possibly with some exceptions. With the development of formal religion, different groups of people who spent their lives on meditation and prayer for the ultimate called *nirvana*, *moksha*, salvation etc. were found in all societies, who were known as monks, or priests or *sadhus* or the like. There had been clashes, enmities, deliverances between different groups of people having different religious faiths on the so-called religious grounds changed with sentiments. The materialist would cry how these *sadhus* or monks spend an unproductive life wasting time on illusory mental luxury ; and on the other hand monks would lament now the materialists lead a life with complete spiritual death.



Since formal religions are no absolutes they are fading away with the material progress of mankind, rigorous religious rituals losing momentum except socio-religious functions where adolescents are supposed to participate. A time is not too far when man would profess a new non-formal religion, a religion of ethics and human conscience and formal religion a notional.

There is no indication in any literary account so far available with us that Kangba, Kongba, Kouba, Shelloy-Langmai, Chenglei etc. who are believed to be the earliest settlers of Imphal valley had any formal religion. They seem to have taken god for all those things or objects which they could not understand, and to have a general fear for all those objects that could harm them. They personified and worshipped them by offering food which they took best, so that such things did not harm them. The most dreadful god was the sky-god which they believed the thunder and lightning with clouds lowering down were his acts to crush them.

The Langmai tribe is found in Ningthourol Lambuba, while they were on the Langmai hills, in connection with the descriptions of the marriage of Langmainu Ahongbi a beautiful girl which the text compares with, as the text writes, "*Leiren leichou-bu lāngmei punghen-man khudol khui-tang hāpna sam-mei samton-yom huk-tung thāngna thabākngēithongda chingsong phāllang thakta khongsat manpanlon lāngmei ton-men noybu noyna ngamhoubi*", which may be rendered as, "(She had) decorated her hair with a bunch of flowers on the top of the knot of the hair on the back and the remaining portion of the hair falling on her front loosely over the bosoms, looks even more beautiful than the scene when the wind blows over soft low weeds growing on the beautiful contours of the hills", who belonged to a Langmai tribe to Khuiyoi Tompok, the son of Pakhangba, to have been described, "not far off from the thought of living when the sky was lowering down, when they did not know the art of agriculture, when they did not know how to construct a house, when they lived on tree tops, when they did not rear domesticated animals and birds, when they did not know how to cook food and when they were naked".

Quoting the text, "*Nongmāinu (Langmainu) Ahongbi, Korou aw<sup>-</sup>ngbadagi kaochandi, korou asum thāptaringei, wāngbal asum tāmдарingei, mālem tampāk leinem anemba ashina wānglamngei, korou awāngbana nemlamngei, pāmel urupāng lānglen kongyāng waana, maton kon, touraang khaangpaksana paallamngeida, chengchaa maingou taanphada, cheirei phingou angoubasu phouphada, kairei chengjaa angouba, menaang taamba turengkai angoubasu loiphadaringei, korouna waangkhatkharangei, waangbal awaangbana humkhatkHINGEI, korou nonglaokhonga maalem tampaak leiraokhonga, taana taana paallamngei, Meiding-ngu Khuiyoi Tompok-na Nongmainu Ahongbibu kaacheng naiphaa thaangna kao-kou-ye*", which may be rendered as follows, "Nongmainu Ahongbi, caught from high sky, when the sky was nearer, when the sky was not far away, when the low plains were higher, when the sky was low, in the crevices of trees, the bundling tops of bamboos, while making huts for sheltering (on tree tops of bamboos and into the root crevices of trees), since living when the sky was lowering down, without husking rice, without cooking white rice, without sunning white cloths, without rearing white chicken, without rearing goats, when the sky was moving higher, when the sky was moving further away, living when the noise of the clouds and the noise of the earth were mingling, Meitei king Khuiyoy Tompok caught Nongmainu Ahongbi for wife". It may be noted that Nongmainu Ahongbi later became a goddess under the name 'Imoinu Ahongbi'.

Most of these tribes continued to live in their primitive stages of social life upto about the 10th century A.D. By more or less about the same period of arrival of the earlier settlers, some neo-Tibetan tribes also entered Manipur and settled on the north and north-eastern parts of the valley. Of these tribes mention may be made of Lei-hou, Lei-nung, Khu-nung, Kham-nung, Khu-man etc. besides the neo-Tibetan or supposed Tibeto-Burman and neo-Burmese tribes like Heirong, Kharoi, Ngangoi, Haokap, Chingsang etc. These two sets of tribes appear to be more advanced than the earlier tribes. Lei as discussed in earlier sections were Chakhas. The rulers of the tribes like Nung(ba), Kham(ba), Lei(nu), Khu(nu),

Hao(ba) and Man were Chakkhan princes of descents of Tagaung rulers. Poireiton the Chakkhan prince is the first formal king in Imphal valley whose seat of administration was the southern part of Kangla-tongbi. It was prince Poireiton who brought a pre-Buddhist culture, rather the Vedic culture, on this valley as the first formal worship.

In many accounts of Manipur and also in Poireiton Khunthok we frequently find a passage which runs thus, "*Khaaningba hongnade, mikouba hongnade, khaaning mikou ama teibadi Iyuwa Chingkhong Poireiton-na konbane*". The passage may be rendered as follows, 'The change of allegiance of an old culture and courtesy to a new one is a forbidden practice. The changes brought by our Lord Chingkhong Poireiton to a new one is the latter'. It shows that Poireiton had a different form of worship and mode of addressing people than that of the earlier tribes and of some latter tribes. In short Poireiton had brought a new light of civilization. Poireiton was addressed by the people as *iyuwa* meaning 'My lord the younger'. It may be mentioned here that some scholars interpret the meaning of *iyuwa* as *ibudhou* which means 'great grand father'. The modern word *iwa* meaning 'My husband' is the same Chakkhan word formation like *iyuwa* and it is a Chakkhan origin. Here it also indicates husband is the master of woman. People of other ranks and files used to call themselves as *ichuma* meaning 'My friend'. Thus 'i' (pronounced as i) here stands for 'My'. It is mentioned in different accounts as discussed in the section on Poireiton that he met a man named Yoimongba who belonged to a Ngangoi tribe in course of his migration to this valley. Yoimongba first addressed Poireiton as *ichuma* and when Poireiton disclosed his identity, Yoimongba apologized, complemented and said, "You are not *ichuma*, you are *iyuwa*". The above passage further reveals that all the tribes arriving before and just after Poireiton did not have a society under a formal king, at the most they had *khullaakpa* i.e. village chief. Thus the hierarchy of addressing people according to his social status was possibly non-existent in that earlier society. The image of this culture is still visible in the Manipuri society of

today. People are addressed according to his or her either inherited or acquired social status. Thus there is no common word for addressing people like that of *aap* in Hindi and *aapni* in Bengali. A common people is addressed by his juniors in age of the same generation as *tada* equivalent to Indo-Aryan *dada*. There was one word also in use *iyamba*. But to a descent of royalty is *sanakha*, a princely descent *macha-ibungo*, a descent of royalty through matrilineal lines *tasbungo*, a royalty by a younger royalty in age of the same degree *yaambung* and so on. So in Manipuri society the mode of addressing people is the most complicated one possibly not found elsewhere in India. Besides, the finite verbs are also applied according to the social status of the person. Thus a king never 'walks' but 'moves', never 'sleeps' but 'reclines' and so on. The topic is not discussed here in detail as it is out of the scope of this book. The changes in the mode of addressing people brought by Poireiton indicate the coming of an era of formal king-ship in Imphal valley.

In Poireiton Khunthok it is stated that Tabung Shingminaba fell seriously ill and was virtually declared dead and possibly was about to be buried but life to Tabung Shingminaba was rekindled and regained his consciousness. In his dream he went to the land of Kham-nung and met his uncle king Thongaren. The king persuaded the child to go back to his parents. At last he came and thus regained his consciousness. Tabung Shingminaba narrated the instructions given by his uncle king. King Thongaren instructed him to perform a sacrifice for their prosperity. The contents of the instruction of the sacrificial rituals cannot come from without, the child must have heard from his family before he was fallen ill. Accordingly the parents sacrificed a young cow for the longevity of Tabung Shingminaba by piercing a stick possibly through the heart of the young cow. Quoting the text which states, "..... *maalem khunphaoraknges-gi, thoudu nungthong haangba shan maanbi cheengthang salai maanbabu, maanbi leega thuna, lumersaangna, Tarang Leichamyang Leingambabu marong chei-ga tamhallo, Kanglei shaa-yi taana Chingkhong nami-yokna saakan-na-O,*" which

may be rendered as, "... You sacrifice a young cow similar to that of the young cow which they employed in removing the rock that blocked their way in course of their migration, by tying a cane on her neck, and let a stick *marong chei* be inserted by Tarang Leichamyang Leingamba longitudinally and let the blood of the sacrificed animal be fallen on to the ground of the land of Kangla, and save your life".

It may be investigated what the word or rather the article *marong chei* indicates. *Marong chei* means *marong*-stick. The text says that a cow was to be sacrificed and her blood was to ooze and fall on the ground, and *marong chei-ga tamhallo* indicates the killing of the cow was to be accomplished by piercing the *marong chei* longitudinally through the body of the young cow. Thus *marong chei* is a specially prepared stake for the sacrifice. However in some manuscripts iron sword is also found to have been mentioned concurrently with *marong chei* which is said to have been used to sabre the head of the cow. It seems this is a later addition. The method of killing cows in sacrifices by piercing a stake through her vital organ i.e. through her heart is found to have been done by the Vedic people in their so-called *Sula-gavya* sacrifice as recorded in Hindu scriptures. The ceremony of cow sacrifice of Poiraiton's tribe was called *Shan-tam(ba)*. It may be noted that the vehicle of Siva the bull is also called Shantamba. The god they worshipped in that sacrifice was *Sararen* the sky-god. The Indo-Aryan sources also indicate that the Vedic people worshipped *Surendra* the sky-god or simply Indra in *Sula-gavya* sacrifice for their prosperity. The old Manipuri word for worship is *irat* and the Vedic word for the same is *irah*, but *i* of *i-rat* seems to be the possessive form of the word *ei* meaning I, since we find words like *lam-lat*, *Kasa-lat* etc. Thus the root word is *rat* or *lat*. More details may be seen in the section on Meiteilon or Manipuri language.

Even during the period of Asoka there were many Sakyas and Moriyas who were against Buddhism as evident from the account that Tissarakkha the second queen of Asoka was against

Buddhism, she even injured the Bodh Gaya tree. As such it is not impossible to imagine Abhi Raja and Dhaja Raja were the upholders of the Brahmanical faith and they were against Buddhism. None of the accounts either fabulous or tradition gives their allegiance to Buddhism. The epic Mahabharata also gives an account of Brahmanism flourishing in the kingdom of Mayura Dhaja (Dhaja Raja) and its neighbouring kingdom Manipur (Kabow valley).

It is therefore seen that the religion of Poiraiton was the Vedic religion and that he brought the religion to Imphal valley in a period when there was a strong wave of revivalism of Brahmanical faith possibly with some modifications and reformations after a serious threat by Buddhism in the Indian mainland. The Vedic culture of Poiraiton seems to have been later mingled up with elements of snake-god worship known as Nāga culture but none of the literary accounts suggests the practice of this culture, but later practice, clearly suggest the presence of this culture in his time. All accounts dealing with Poiraiton are silent about this culture. It is said that the Tagaung country the earlier home of the Chakchas was noted for the Nāga traditions and further said while Dhaja Raja the Chakchan king was ascending the throne of Tagaung assuming the title Thado Jambudipa, he was accompanied by Brahma and Nāga king on the right and on the left by Sakra and Pajjumba. The image of this culture is revealed only in the later period when the three clans began to be formed. Different varieties of snakes and pythons were grouped according to the three clans namely Luwang, Mangang and Khuman of the Meitei setup. It is said that the snakes and pythons belonging to the Khumans are very dangerous. There is a false belief among the Meiteis that if they happen to meet a python an incurable disease will be imparted on them which is called *laichu-ba* specially the Khuman pythons. Pakhangba possibly the 10th descendant of Poiraiton has been symbolically represented by a snake. This culture had a strong impact on the Meitei society and the image of this culture is still visible to this day. Superstitious and orthodox Meiteis take the

snakes as gods, any snake that happens to enter into the dwelling house will be offered with red flower, seshame seeds, husked rice and buds with leaves of *langthrei* a herbal plant for the prosperity of the inmates of the house which is called '*Ckaukku lanku-bi-ba*' and also for averting the wrath of the snake god, and the ritual is usually followed by a '*Maibi-laibao*'. More details of *Maibi laibao* are discussed in the later part of this article.

The only evidence of the existence of the Nāga culture is the river name the Nāga stream. The source of this stream is on the north of present Luwangsangbam and north-west of Koirengai air field which was the southern limit of the Poireis of the 12th century A.D. At present the stream runs from where on the east of Koirengai, then moves towards the west and finally joins the Nambul river at Khwairamban Bazar. By now this stream looks like a nullah but by the 12th century A.D. it could have been a beautiful stream. No record is available how the name Nāga came into existence but Ningthourol Lambuba gives an interpretation of the origin of the name Nāga (Naka), quoting the text which states, "*Shelloy yawa sujanam Langmai laikoi thonglabagi mapum naina nata shingda kare Naaka-O haidabara*". It may be mentioned here that Cheitharol Kumbaba also records the existence of the river name the Nāga stream.

The name Nāga is found to have been recorded or used as early as the 12th century A.D. in connection with an ambush during the period of Ura Konthouba (c. 1190-1215 A.D.) in which the Shelloy-Langmai who settled on the hill now known as the Mapao hills went on an expedition to assault the Haokap, Chingsang, Khunpham etc. who by that time inhabited on the north of the Nongmaijing hills and on their return they were ambushed by Ura Konthouba where some of them were killed at the Nāga stream somewhere on the north-west of Koirengai.

Notwithstanding the interpretation of the Ningthourol Lambuba and since there is the name Nāga, it suggests that some tribes who followed the Nāga cult could have settled somewhere

near the source of the stream and the Nāga culture too got gradually infused to the Poireis. Since then the stream became known as the Nāga stream like the Kongba stream, the Chenglei-Nawāng stream etc.

Besides the Nāga cult the Poireis also worshipped the god or goddess of vitality called *Kasha* which they called *Kasha-iratpa* as evident from the account that king Loiyumba (c.1310-36 A.D.) and his queen Sumleima worshipped *Kasha* for the vitality of their young prince Loitongba, quoting the text, Ningthourol Lambuba, which states, "... *Lairiku Kasha-lat chinglon tamlon suna korou Machi-lat... ..*". The text does not mention whether *Kasha* was a god or goddess of vitality but the traditions, and the living vocabulary for 'wet dream' which is called *kasha-chatpa* clearly indicates that *Kasha* was a god of vitality. It is very likely that the slang *kashubi* meaning whore is derived from the word *kasha*.

This form of religious worship continued to follow on the northern part of the Imphal valley upto about 1200 A.D. by all the tribes under the hegemony of the Poirei kings. By this period there were new immigrants of tribes of Tibeto-Burman origin, of Tai origin, and other of neo-Burmese origin besides those mentioned above.

As discussed in the section on Funan, Maring, Mon-Khmer, the religion brought by these group of people was that of Saivism. This is clearly seen from their religious background to which these people were subjected to. In Cambodia upto about the 10th or 11th century A. D. the Brahmanical faith continued to flourish concurrently with Buddhism. The shrine of Siva on the top of the Nongmajing hills near Khalong was installed by these group of people, which is now known as the Varuni Mahadeva. When the tribes like Shelloy-Langmai, Nongmai, Funan, Maring, Mon-Khmer, Senbi, Nongbal fused together into one political unit under the name Nongbal the Siva worship became their religion. Before the amalgamation the true Nongbals seem to follow the religion of the Poireis. They devised the legend of Siva and



Parvati with some fictitious names of their tribe. Nongpok the supposed ancestor of the true Nongbals is personified to be the Siva of the legend. Nongpok is a fictitious name which means Nong-Apokpa meaning the ancestor of the Nong tribe. As discussed in earlier sections that Nongbal is a Tibeto-Burman of Tai origin where Nong is the name of a Tai tribe. As for Parvati they had taken a name from the Tai pantheon. There is a male god named Panthoi who was sent to the earth by Langdon. In the name Panthoi they added the feminine suffix *-bi* and the resulted name Panthoibi represented Parvati. In Panthoibi Khongkul an account of the legend of Nongpok and Panthoibi the parentage and the former husband of Panthoibi are given in the form of a historical novel. Thus the myth of Nongpok and Panthoibi was developed and the characters became the god and goddess of the Nongbals. So it is seen that in the eastern part of Imphal valley Saivism in its vernacularised form existed from about the 13th century A.D.

In the western part of Imphal valley the Loi and their associate tribe Chakpa brought with them Buddhism that had been strangled by various heathens which was a mixture of black magic, witch craft and Siva worship. In short Buddhism was the religion of the western part of the valley by about the 12th and 13th century A.D. As for the southern and south-western parts of the valley, it is discussed later.

It appears in northern India specially in the foothills of the Himalayas there was a Mongoloid civilization before the coming of the Aryans. These Mongoloid tribes were people of the Himalayan region and latter known as sub-Himalayan or neo-Tibetan tribes. Most of the Mongoloid tribes who settled on the lower Gangetic plains got mixed with the Aryans and other dark-skinned tribes and became known as Indo-Aryans. Of these Mongoloid tribes who are recorded in history, mention may be made of Chakkha (Sakya) Nga (Anga), Pa-Nga (Banga), Kali-Nga (Kalinga), Leichhavi (Lichhavi), Kha-cha (Khasya) etc. About the name of Leichhavi it has been discussed in earlier sections that the word is derived from the practice of trimming the frontal hair. This style of hair

dressings was known as *Leichhavi* meaning 'flower modelled'. The style was later confined to the girls only. When the girls got married the trimming was stopped and it became a conventional style for the girls and the word too became known for girls of marriageable age and of virgins in modern Manipuri language.

Again another culture found among the Tangkhul tribes of Manipur is the decoration of a large metallic ring by inserting in specifically perforated lower ear. When the ring is removed the ear becomes unnaturally long as seen in the ears of the statues of Gautama Buddha. It may not be far too wrong to assume that the tribe of Gautama Buddha used to decorate their ears with wooden ornaments like that of Tangkhuls, and when Gautama Buddha renounced the world he stopped wearing the ornament and hence his ears became unnaturally long. It is said that Gautama Buddha belonged to the MoraNga (Moranga) clan of the Himalayan tribe Chakkha (Sakya).

In the Moriya city the ancient capital of Manipur there was the ancient pre-Buddhist culture from about 200 B C. The Sakyas as stated above were sub-Himalayan tribes. Before coming of the Aryans in the Punjab plains they possibly inhabited the hanging valley of the Sangpo river near the Manas Sarovar lake, from where they dispersed towards the Punjab plains in the west and the lower Gangetic plains. They were probably worshippers of *Siva* the pre-Aryan Mongoloid god. When Aryanisation started there were struggles among the Aryans and Mongoloids for supremacy of their gods as reflected in the Mahabharata. The god of the Aryans by that period was probably Vishnu the Guru. The Aryans developed a myth in which the Aryan god Vishnu became supreme. It is mentioned in the Mahabharata that the Aryan sages had a conference on the bank of the Ganges to investigate which of the gods namely Vishnu and Siva, was the supreme. So they deputed a team of sages headed by Bhrigu Muni for the investigation. The team first moved to Siva and abused Him of his untidy personal hygiene and of smoking hashish. On hearing the taunting words Siva became furious. The sages left Him saying He was

'a small god' as He was quick tempered. Then the party went to Vishnu who was found relaxing on the bed nursed by His consort Lakshmi. Bhrgu Muni moved forward and kicked Vishnu on His chest. Instead of rousing to temper for the barbarous behaviour of the sage, Vishnu calmly welcomed the sages. Then the sages returned saying Vishnu was the real 'greater god'.

Siva was given several other names of Indo-Aryan origin like Mahadeva, Maheswar, Sankar, Kei-lash-nath etc. In course of Aryanisation Mahadeva became included in the Hindu pantheon. Mahadeva became an Aryan god. It is mentioned in different Hindu scriptures that the Aryans worshipped Mahadeva. Even the Jadavas used to pay homage to Mahadeva when Krishna was a small boy. In Vaisnavite literatures when Krishna was about 7 years old met Radha when the latter was going to pay homage to Mahadeva in the temple of Mahadeva. In Hindu pantheon Mahadeva becomes one of the triads namely Brahma the Creator, Vishnu the Preserver and Maheswar the Destroyer.

It appears the meaning of Siva in the dialect of that Himalayan tribe who developed the concept of the god Siva, is destroyer or killer or death. In Manipuri language *Siva* (*Siba*) means death in verb form and its noun form is *A-Siva* (*.1-siba*).

In Upper Burma by about the 9th century A.D. to the time of Anawrahta. Buddhism "began to be strangled by various heathen growths and to become mingled with debased Tantric system which is a mixture of black magic, witchcraft and Siva worship". There were a group of monks who were known as *Ari* monks. "In Pagan a degenerated form of Buddhism, believed to have originally migrated from North Bengal and Nepal, prevailed under the influence of the *Ari* monks who, it is said, were thirty in number with sixty thousand disciples. Some writers are of the opinion that the *Ari* cult which swayed in upper Burma, was a distinct development of the Tibetan Buddhism. The *Ari* were centred at Thamhati village, a few miles south-east of Pagan. The *Ari* lords rejected the law preached by Lord Buddha and professed cults of their own, particularly one of Dragon (*Nāga*)

worship in which Buddha and his Sakti wives are figured". It is said that Saw Rahan (931-64 A.D.) who was under the influence of the *Ari*, erected an image of a serpent and asked the people to bow down and worship it.

The Manipuri accounts do not mention anything of the religious worship of the Moriyas except some references of the reformation of calendar by one Moriya Phamballacha when they were active on the southern part of Imphal valley by further expanding or moving westward of Moriya. However the earlier background, and the background to which the Moriya principality was subjected to clearly suggest that they had Brahmanical religion mixed with Tantric and other heathens. The Loi were found in the Ango hills and east of the upper Ningthi valley, and a branch of Loi or their associate tribe called Chakpa entered Imphal valley sometime in the 12th century A.D., with Buddhism that had been strangled with Tantric and other heathens. They also worshipped fire and used to burn their dead bodies which was not adopted by other tribes. This is perhaps the image of the Brahmanical culture that entered South-east Asia. Relying on Poireiton Khunthok, the Chakpas must have dispersed in the Upper Ningthi valley at least in the closing part of the 8th century A.D. but it is more likely after the destruction of Pyu in the year 832 A.D. by the Man rebels. The Manipur tradition says that the Loies were noted for their *jadu mantras* of Tantric culture which is also sometimes called *mabei* to this date. The text narrates how Poireiton saw a column of smoke which was later revealed to be the smoke of cremation of a Chakpa boy named Sangphuraipha who died of an accident.

The Loi first settled on the foothills of western hills adjoining the valley, and because of the association with the Loi the hill also came to be known as Loibi-ching meaning Loi-hill. The Loi people were called Loi-bi by the Poireis just like Sen(Siam) people were called Sen-bi. They are described to be the speakers of *lonthei* meaning 'deviated language'. They were subjugated by the Peirei kings. In later period they were further subjected under different pressures and their religion too died. As time passed on they were

under the influence of purer form of Saivism. Thus the image of their debased Buddhism appears to have disappeared from about the 14th century A.D. When all forgot that there was Buddhism on this valley, some discovered a stone image of Gautama Buddha somewhere in the area of Moitangpok and bank of the Maklang-khong stream which was worshipped by the ancestors of Chakpa, took it to be the image of Mahadeva (Siva) and began to worship the image. This image is still preserved at Ingourok and the diety is now known as 'Ingourok-Mahadeva'. Many Hindus of today use to go there to pay homage to that diety. The exceptionally long ears of the image, a distinct characteristic of Gautama Buddha, clearly indicates that the image of Ingourok-Mahadeva is a Gautama Buddha statue, even though there was strong image of Buddhism and Buddha in Hindu sculpture found elsewhere in India.

At about the latter half of the 11th century A.D. tribes like Funan, Maring, Mon-Khmer, Senpi etc. came to the kingdom of Manipur. The Marings as discussed in the section on Funan, Maring, Mon-Khmer were tribes of Mon origin like Man, Meng, Hmeng etc. The Austro-Asiatic people were the inhabitants of Kamboja Desha (Cambodia) most probably on the western parts of Kamboja in eastern Burma. In Kamboja Buddhism began to be followed but still other forms of Hinduism continued to be followed in the 11th century A.D. It is said that the inscription of Lopburi of the first half of the 11th century A.D. reveals that the Khmer kings allowed the Brahmanical faiths to flourish in their kingdom. In that inscription the Khmer kings granted equal privileges to both sects of Buddhism and other forms of Hinduism, though the king and people were Buddhist yet Brahmanical rites were observed. "The royal Buddhist monks, for instance gave to Suryavarman I the posthumous name Nirvana Pada, while the Brahmins called him Suryavansi, that is the one born of the God sun and possessing the grace of Vishnu".

Unlike Kamboja, Thaton by the 11th century A.D. followed a purer form of Buddhism originally brought by two Buddhist missionaries namely Sona and Uttara from Canzevaram in South

India in the 5th century A.D. during the Pallavas. By that time Thaton was known as Suvarnabhumi and was ruled by Manoha (Manohara). His full name given by the Hindus was Siri-tri-bhubana-didya-paras-dhamma-raja Manoha. It is also said that "Thaton had adopted Buddhism from Canzevaram, which in the eleventh century was dominated by Brahmanism .. ..". Before coming of Buddhism, Thaton followed some form of Hinduism brought from Java.

So it is seen that the form of religion in these two kingdoms were practically the same. One distinct characteristic of these forms of Hinduism is that they had a fancy for the Ramayana legends. Most names of cities were given names according to the Ramayana legends like Ayothiya (Ayodhya), Champanagara etc. On the other hand in Burma, it appears, people had a fancy for the Mahabharata legends. This is perhaps the difference of the Indian cultural zones that moved to these areas. The Hinduism that moved to East Indies was from South India where Ramayana legends were very popular, whereas in Northern India the Mahabharata legends were very popular. In Burma, tribes of sub-Himalayan or neo-Tibetan origin who got mixed with the Aryans, who became known as Indo-Aryan moved not as missionaries but as colonists and settled there. These colonists gave names of cities, rivers etc according to the Mahabharata legends like Panchala, Irrawaddy (Irabati), Mali etc.

There is a place on the Maring hills called Sita in the kingdom of Manipur. In a village named Makeng in Sita there is a rock on which crevices are seen which according to the Maring traditions are the footprints of Sita wife of Rama. For this reason the place was called Sita. This is a clear image of the Cambodian culture. So it is seen that the Austro-Asiatic group of people like Funan, Maring, Mon-Khmer who came to this kingdom in the latter half of the 11th century A.D. followed a form of Hinduism or Buddhism or an admixture of both mixed with Tantric culture. It also appears from the culture of the Marings of today that they had some

elements of Tantric culture mixed with heathens. As discussed in earlier sections the shrine of Siva near Khalong on the top of the Nongmaiching hills was installed by these Cambodian tribes.

At about 1225 A.D. another fresh wave of Saivism and also possibly some followers of Vishnu cult came to this land. This purer form of Saivism had renovated the earlier debased Saivism and gave a strong impact on the earlier population and perhaps became a very popular religion. The religion was not brought by any missionary but brought by the Bangals and proto-Bangals. The religious belief of these group of people has already been discussed in the section on Bangal. It is most probable that there were some scholars and religious philosophers in the court of the Bangal principality of Lamangdong. The image of this culture is felt on the Poirei kings. There is no historical record about the worships of king Naothingkhong and his wife Chingurembi, but Khongtekcha the son of Naothingkhong is found to be a devotee of Devi. A copper plate was discovered in the early part of the 20th century A.D. in which the rituals of Devi performed by king Khongtekcha is said to have been inscribed. Ning'hourol Lambuba refers to a statement of Khongtekcha becoming very religious and philosophical in the latter part of his life and he spent his life on meditation though he died young. He probably died at about 1260 A.D.

It is most probable that Devi was worshipped by constructing temples in every principal village where the compound of the temples were properly protected. Rituals of Devi were performed in such temples possibly by priests. The life how Khongtekcha spent also suggests Naothingkhong and his wife Chingurembi were devotees of Siva and Devi. It is possible through family education Khongtekcha became a spiritualist and devotee of Devi. They did not declare Saivism as the state religion since Manipur was not unified, but being the religion of the royalties the people followed it. The way of life seems to have some changes. In some manuscripts Naothingkhong and Khongtekcha are said to have been cremated instead of burrying as done earlier showing a strong impact of the new form of religion.

There was a political turmoil lasting about a decade following the death of Khongtekcha. In Cheitharol Kumbaba it is mentioned that there was an interregnum of 11 years following the death of Khongtekcha. It was then followed by a strong cultural force of remnants of Confucianism mixed with Brahmanical faith, which included sacrifices and ancestor worship, which the Ngai Lao branch of Tai followed. Originally Confucian culture did not include sacrifices but from the first century A.D. it seems this culture of animal sacrifice penetrated possibly from Cambodia which by that time came under Brahmanical rule. The mixed culture was also followed by the Lai tribes who were in northern Burma in the 8th century A.D. before entering Manipur. The Lai tribes took their ancestors as gods and worshipped them for their prosperity. They celebrated a socio-religious function every year which they called *Harao(ba)*. Since the function was associated with the Lai tribes it became known as *Lai-haraoba*. The southern part of Imphal valley was a zone of amalgamated cultures of Lai and Moriya. The Kegees were the subjects of the Moriya rulers while the Moirangs were the subjects of Lai rulers. The pantheon of Saivism were brought into the fold of the Lai culture. As discussed in earlier sections, Lai were degenerated Tai and there is a strong essence of Ngai Lao legends in Lai culture. Most of the manuscripts so far collected appear to be of Kege-Moirang origin. The nine son legend of Kangba is an exact imitation of Ngai Lao legends. Thus Siva and Devi began to mingle up with the ancestor of Lai and different Devi shrines or temples were given the names of female Lai ancestors. The Kali temple began to mix with Lai-khurembu, Kālikā etc. and with some other ancestor; and male ancestors like Lai Thangjing, Lai Khoriphaba etc. are however found free. The mingling of the two cultures creates much confusion particularly when the name Lai changed to a vocabulary meaning 'god'. Sometimes a question comes to our minds like, 'Was Kāli or Kālikā the wife of Khamlāngba? As discussed in the section on Mayāng, it may be pointed out that Khamlāngba belonged to a Sāchung tribe who married the daughter of Songlen Lānthaba (c. 1850-60 A.D.) the Moirang



chief The name of the Moirang princess is given in some manuscripts as Samphabi while in some other the name of the wife Khamlängba is given as Kālikā without referring to the name of her father. In Kege-Moirang principality such type of Moriya names are frequently found. They were under the influence of Lai culture and this prominent spouse became god and goddess. Now we find the shrine of Khamlängba with his wife Kālikā. Hence Kālikā has nothing to do with Devi, she is probably the daughter of Songlen Lānthaba where her other name is Samphabi.

Lai-khu-rembi is the wife of Thongaren and the shrine of Lai-khu-rembi in Imphal often gets confused with the Kāli temple. When the pre-vaisnavite culture is carefully examined, both Brahmanical culture and Lai culture are clearly visible, the rituals of *Lai-rembis* are similar in both form and spirit with that of Devi. Even the worship of Panthoibi that lasted for some five days called Panthoibi puja or Panthoibi irat which begins from the 6th day of lunar Mera corresponding to Sukla Swasti (6th day) of lunar Kartik, is the very Durga puja as seen from the concept of A-Panthoi or Nongpok and Panthoibi for Siva and Parvati respectively. Siva too a Mongoloid god that became included in the Aryan pantheon. In short Panthoibi irat is the local name of the Durga puja, though it originally belonged to the worship of the amalgamated Nongbals. With the expansion of this culture Siva became gradually pushed towards the hills. We find different shrines of Siva on the hills and foot hills. Both Laikhurembi and Leinaotabi were wives of king Thongaren, but only Laikhurembi is found to be worshipped as goddess being a Lai origin and not Leinaotabi who was of Chakhan origin having a different culture. Yabiraka the mother of Pakhangba is also not worshipped as a goddess as she also belonged to the Chakha tribe. Thus Lai-rembi or Umang-Lai culture is purely a Lai origin mixed with Brahmanism and other heathens.

Tantric culture: The exact time of emergence of Tantric culture in its magnified and devoting form cannot be ascertained but prior to the Santhali cult the culture had progressed considerable

rably even though there were images of it since the 11th century A.D. However its magnified form is believed to have been brought by the Brahmins who migrated or arrived on this land in the latter half of the 15th century A.D. during the reign of Kiyamba. In Bamon Khuuthoklon an account on Brahmin immigrants, it is said that 18 Brahmin families migrated from different parts of India to Imphal valley during the reign of the above mentioned king and were allotted different family titles and absorbed in society. We have no record of Brahmins migrated earlier than this period and those Brahmins migrated earlier than the period of Kiyamba were possibly absorbed in the society without any social distinction. Even the Brahmins who migrated during the reign of Kiyamba had no specific social status as compared with latter immigrants. They spent their lives as commoners. Most of the Brahmins who migrated upto the time of Kiyamba appear to be non-Vaisnavites. It is probable that most of them followed Brahmanical faith. Some were possibly upholders of Atharva Veda and Tantric cult. Among those Brahmins who migrated during the reign of Kiyamba, one Brahmin named Ghanaram is found to be a Tantradhar and another named Hari is found to be a scholar with the title Vidyalankar. The new Tantric culture appears to have confined to the Brahmins. There is a fabulous account in which a scholar of the 18th century A.D. named Khongnāngthāba also known as Khongnāngthāba Pandit had a contest with Shantidas a religious preacher in *Tantric mantras*. It is not known how far Shantidas was proficient in Tantricism. He was a follower of the Bhakti cult.

The *Tantric mantras* became known as *Laiwas* also *Jadu mantras* when it became popularised among the mass. The Tantric culture gave the strongest impact on the society of this kingdom. Every person believed in the *Laiwas*. The *Amaibas* and scholars in their possession had a stock pile of *Laiwas* ranging from mere pain killers to killers. By using *laiwas* they believed they could invoke the devils and induce them to kill a person. In such processes, with elaborate rituals they would make an effigy of a man by bee wax known as *khoiru mitamba* presumably representing

the man to be killed, and chant *laiwas* or *jadu mantras*. Then they would let the wax effigy be pierced through by a specially prepared arrow which had also been chanted with *laiwas*, or some times they would burn the effigy. When the rituals were completed they believed the man would die. They also believed that by chanting *laiwas* they could make a man insane; they could make a girl follow a boy, the technic of this *laiwa* is known as *tareng leibi*; they could make people quarrel, the technic of this *laiwa* is called *higiuw*; they could induce a disease to a person; they could fight with the evil spirit; they could make a man vapourished and so on. In short every spare of life, they believed, would be controlled by *laiwas*. But it appears they had no *laiwas* to make a fool wise.

We examine some short versed *laiwas* which do not need elaborate rituals as given below.

Applications	Laiwās
1. Pain killer :	Ong hoong kling shring ru ru i-shu i-shu.
2. Crushing evil spirit :	Kling phara phara rāj hui set.
3. Invocation of Pakhangba :	Ong ung sāntarang nongtarang ngāntarang tarang sānong san.
4. Pain killer type (with much vernacularised <i>laiwās</i> to control hicups).	Hai thagokpa ikaidaba Guru-gi phāng- khongdagi yerum apumba hurānduna chāba hallo hai.

The *laiwa* stated in (1) is a pain killer when chanted by the *Amaiva* with usually a heavy, thud, and systematic forceful sound over, say, loin where there is pain. In (2), the person is to chant the stated *laiwa* on his finger tips and then used like a long sword by imagination to sabre the head of *bhoot* or any other evil spirit which appears before him. In (3), the *laiwa* is chanted to please *Pakhangba* before any other rituals are performed. In (4), the *laiwa* is chanted to control hicups.

It is evident from the wordings of the *laiwas* stated above, that most of them are Vedio words of Tantric nature excepting the

last one which is in the form of vernacular Tantras. As stated earlier, Tantric culture gave a lasting effect. Shantidas Gosai who burnt down Tantric literature during the reign of Pamahiba, actually failed to remove the superstitions from the masses. However it is believed, it has reduced its momentum to a great extent. It lingers even to this date i.e. the last quarter of the 20th century A.D. It is said that some ministers and members of the legislative assembly, who have come on peoples' mandate, from whom people expect something positive, are found practicing *laiwas* in their quarters. It is also said that some of them are found wearing copper tubings called *Jantras* packed with *laiwas* written on *bhuja patru* (birch bark) hanging from *mai yokwa*, *anti-thamau* etc to *anti-anti-higaiwas*, on their arms and waist which in some individuals, would weigh as much as one fourth of a kilogram.

At a time when writing paper was unknown to man, people used to write on palm leaves and birch barks. Since birch barks are thin enough and at the same time they can be folded, they were chiefly used for writing mantras or *laiwas* that would occupy a minimum volume when folded and to insert in *jantras*. The practice continued even after the development of writing paper and hence for this reason people believed that birch bark had magical power. Truly speaking birch barks have no magical power. In this century very thin tissue papers have been developed and if they want to write at all it would be better to write on these papers rather than birch bark the primitive paper.

The Tantric terror of the pre-Purheiba period is clearly reflected from the following traditions. Even as late as the first half of the twentieth century A.D., whenever there was any construction of bridge children were much afraid of going to the construction site because they felt from the mouth of their elders that they could be caught and sacrificed unlike present day children who would flock the site witnessing the pier drivings. It is a fact that there was a traditional belief that 'human life is sacrificed in the construction of a bridge' specially children to propitiate gods for the smooth construction of the bridge.

There were groups of people who were sent by the nobles or kings for child lifting specially in the dusk and night, who were called *churaanthaabas*. Every mother was much afraid of the *churaanthaabas*. They would tell stories of the *churaanthaabas* to their children and thus a fear of the *churaanthaabas* was created in the minds of their children. In turn they used to say to their erring children '*churaanthaaba-challe*' meaning '*Churaanthaaba is roaring*' to stop them moving out of their homes. The traditional belief further says in case the *churaanthaaba* was unable to lift a child, at least he would try somehow to collect the blood of a child that was to be offered to the Tantric god. It is most likely they collected human blood when human sacrifice was forbidden. People believed if the blood was offered the child from whom the blood was extracted would die in due course. It is quite likely that superstitious people of that period would have taken the death of a child due to tetanus infection through a wound inflicted in the evening or dusk was the aftermath of an action of the *churaanthaaba* whose commission remained unnoticed. It is also certain that they would perform *thou* a kind of offer with rituals and chanting of Tantric mantras to appease the Tantric gods to spare the life of the dying child. On the other hand, it appears, the penalty on the *churaanthaabas* was so severe if they failed to procure a child or at least the blood of a child, they had to kill their own children. This very context becomes a proverb which runs thus, '*Churaanthaaba-na macha haatlee*'. The literal meaning of this proverb is, "When necessity arises even the '*churaanthaabas* kill their own children'".

As regards the origin of the word *churaanthaaba*, it is probable that the word is formed by compounding two words namely *churana* and *siba(ba)* where *churana* possibly a vedic word meaning 'stealing' and *siba(ba)* means 'to send out'. Thus *churaanthaabas* were gang of people sent out to lift children.

These are some of the living examples of the barbaric Tantric rituals of human sacrifice prevalent during the pre-Pamheiba period. We however have lost accounts of human sacrifice

and literature dealing with human sacrifice. It must have been destroyed in the ceremonial burning of *Puyas* by Pamheiba.

The purge of the autocrat monarch Pamheiba on spurious Tantric literature is a momentous task in the history of the Meiteis. Pamheiba may be looked upon as the father of the Meitei community who liberated the mass from the yoke of superstitionism. Even the pilfered elements of Tantric cult from the purge is giving a serious threat to the healthy development of the community of this date as discussed above. The smearing of celt paste, the wearing of copper tubing by the ministers and members of the legislative assembly etc. and how they believe in such semi-barbaric practices are matters of concern. A belief must have a foundation through rationalization, for every occurrence or phenomenon, say', headache has a positive solution too unlike 'If I die who lives there, which is indeed debatable, but these pseudo-politicians of this great republic professing the cult of hooliganism, hypocrisy, character-assassinationism etc seem to prefer the subjective aspect. There is hardly little difference between this belief or practice and that of the one followed in some parts of India where there is draught the women folks would dance and jump with complete naked bodies in the field believing that their dances and naked bodies could appease the sky-god and in turn the sky-god would release rain onto them.

The thinking that our forefathers were much advanced and and much stronger, they lived much longer and used better cloths etc. than us is a thinking without perspective.<sup>1</sup> Definitely our

1. The fabulous imaginations of the early Indian people are reflected in different writings. One such writing is quoted from *The Outline of Literature*, edited by John Drinkwater, page 67 which writes, "The imagination of the Hindus has evolved a series of gorgeous and grotesques dreams, in which all conditions of time and space appear to be obliterated and in which the universe is pictured as it might appear in the vision of a smoker of hashish. It is difficult to gather from these wild fancies of the Indian poets (and the earlier writers were essentially poets) any trustworthy data concerning the history of the past, or any practical instruction by which to guide the life of present."

forefathers lived much shorter and less advanced than us and in short our forefathers were much backward than us. The forefathers of our forefathers were more backward than our forefathers. If we proceed in this way we get ultimately our ancestors who were naked and walked squalid, who were known as stone age people. The forefathers of our stone age forefathers were beasts. Thus we are certainly backward than our progenies to come.

The general knowledge of our school children is perhaps higher than that of the writer of the Gita. In the 21st sloka of chapter X of the infallible Gita, Bhagavan Sri Krishna said, "Among the stars, I am the *Moon*." It is doubtful that our school children will use this simile or metaphor, rather it is more likely, they say, "Among the stars, I am the *Sirius*".

The general knowledge of our forefathers who developed occultism *jadu mantras*, *laiwas* etc must have been definitely very poor in the properties of matter and energy. The man who professed *jadu mantras* could at the most despatch energy released by him in course of the rituals of the *jadu mantra*, through some resonance circuits. We have been nourished in an environment of fantasticism from our very childhood. We have been forced to develop our own vision for *bhoot*, *hyangathouba* etc., a vision of Mr. Christopher Lee for Dracula. In fact there is no Dracula, it is the proto-Dracula that is working in the illusory minds in momentary madness.

The coming of the concept of Sanāmahī and Pākhangba all Tantric works had been made associated with these demi-gods. They appear to be vernacularised Tantric gods.

Umang Lai : As discussed earlier, during the reign of Naothingkhong and Khongtekcha for more than three decades the purer form of Saivism probably flourished under their patronage. People worshipped Devi at different places. The temples of Devi were constructed in principal villages and specific areas were preserved for the temples. The temples were constructed probably by easily perishable materials like bamboo and thatches locally

available. After the political turmoil following the death of Khongtekcha the rituals of Devi seem to have been stopped performing and thus the worship of Devi sank till the wave of Lai culture. Devi worship became mingled up with the Lai ancestor as goddesses. Details of Lai have been discussed in the section on Moirang, Moirang principality and Lai-haraoba. In the festivals of Umang Lai known as Lai-haraoba there are items known as *Lai nupi thiba*, *Lai keithel kaba*, *Lai lamthokpa* etc. in which the deity of the Lai ancestor is carried by four men in a palanquin along streets and markets. In this function the motion of the palanquin becomes erratic owing to the deliberate action of the palanquin carriers or owing to an unsynchronized motion of the men. People would say, *lai ngaore* meaning 'Lai is intoxicated'. In such erratic movements the troupe of four men with palanquin may plough through a crowd or any other object. This type of function with the same erratic motion is also found among some Tai tribes of Thailand. If scientifically analysed there is no reason to believe in this *Lai ngaoba*. The motion of the four men are not mechanically synchronized, over and above these men let lose the motion according to their fancy. Thus it is not the deity of the Lai ancestor who is intoxicated but the four men are intoxicated. However ignorant and superstitious people believe in *Lai ngaoba*.

With the expansion of this mixed culture, that is, the remnants of Confucianism<sup>2</sup> and Brahmanism, originated from Moirang

2. What is Confucianism? In about c 551 B.C. one of the greatest contemporary thinkers named Confucius lived in China. He was born in the feudal state of Lu in modern Shantung province. He is regarded to having been exceptionally clear-headed and capable thinker, and he "ranks in China the founder of its literature, its system of morals, and its religious ideals or standards. He was free from dogmatic conclusions, arbitrary determinations, obstinacy and egotism". He envisaged, "man essentially a social creature who is bound to his fellows by *jen* a term often rendered as 'sympathy' or 'human heartedness'. *Jen* is expressed through the five relations—sovereign and subject, parent and child, elder and younger brother, husband and wife, friend and friend". Of these relations Confucius stressed the first ones.





Thus Lai Ningthou Khoriphaba, Lai Thangjing, Lai-khu-rembi etc. became gods and goddesses. It is therefore seen that Umang Lai culture is a mixed culture of Confucian remnants, Saivism, Tantricism and heathens.

The expansion of Lai culture is followed by a period of 'developing myths'. In this period everything was mystified. Not only Nongta one of the ancestors of the Mangang clan, all other prominent persons were also mystified. Besides the ancestors, prominent persons of other tribes were also mystified. All the mystified characters had been made associated with some legends developed by the *Amaibas* and scholars. Then came the strong wave of Tantricism. The Tantric culture further penetrated into the worship of Umang Lais as seen from the invocation of *Lairembis*, the hymns of which contain Vedic words amidst the vernacular. The nature of rituals had also been much modified with the development of Tantric culture. Hence *Lairembi* becomes synonymous with *Devi*. Even to this date *Devi Puja* or *Durga Puja* is called in Manipuri *Lairembi Puja*. People worshipped *Lairembis* for their prosperity, fertility and for safeguarding them against the attack of other forces. The worship however, did not include any form of prayer for the emancipation of soul as found in the *bhakti cult*. The shrines of *Lairembis* became centres for culture. Of the shrines of *Devi* which is free from mixing with the Lai ancestors is the shrine of *Hiyāngthāng Lairembi* at *Hiyāngthāng* on the south of *Imphal* where there is the *yoni* of *Devi*.

The compounds of *Devi* or *Lai-rembi* were afforested, and thus *Lairembis* were also called *Umang Lais* where *Umang* means forest and *Umang-Lai* means 'forest god'. Since *Umang-Lais* had been made associated with Tantricism they became Tantric gods and goddesses. People were very much afraid of the *Umang-Lais*. There is a reference as late as *chahi taret khuntakpa* in the early 19th century A.D., in which a Burmese general who happened to ease himself in the compound of an *Umang-Lai*, died next day. This event is commented as if a punishment for his disgraceful act. The persistent fear of *Umang-Lais* which mars the otherwise

clear thinking minds of today is indeed the remnants of the Tantric terror.

The Sanāmahi cult In the meantime some scholars devised the mythology of Ganesh and Kartik with some local names, and as they were, most likely, unable to find a suitable name from the Mongoloid pantheon at their disposal invented names to suit the salient characteristics of the above two gods of the Hindu mythology who were sons of Devi They took the complexion Kartik to resemble the colour of molten gold and developed the name *Sana-mahi* meaning 'molten-gold' or 'gold-liquid', Here *Sana* is an Indo-Aryan word from *swarna* or vice versa. The word *sana* came to this valley from the Moriyas and became popular in the southern part of the valley from about the 12th century A D. It is not definitely known whether the Chakkhas used the same word or not but so far the available accounts are concerned, they seem to have adopted the Mangang word *choinou*. Hence in the northern part of the valley the word for gold was *choinou* at about the 13th century A D. when the Mangangs became Poireis At about the 14th century A D. another word *kham* is found to have been used on the western part of the valley, which is a Sen-bi word i.e. a Tai word. The remaining word *mahi* is a Tibeto-Burman word. Again the younger brother of Sanāmahi is called *Pākhangba* which is also a Tibeto-Burman formation.

If the word or myth was developed by the Poireis, the word for Sanamahi should have been *Choinou-mahi* a mixed word of Mangang and other Tibeto-Burmans, and on the other hand if it were developed from the western part of the valley the word should have been *Kham-mahi*, a mixed word of Tai and other Tibeto-Bumans

It is therefore seen that the cult of Sanāmahi cannot at any rate exist earlier than the 7th century A.D. whatever its origin may be, a period when the Tibeto-Burman language was fully characterised, against the claim of some chauvinist scholars who feel the concept of Sanāmahi is as old as several hundred years

before Christ. It is the Moriyas who used the word *sana* in the Kege-Moirang in the 14th century A.D.

The concept of Sanāmahi is therefore seen to have originated from the Kege-Moirang principality and even if it was developed from the Kege-Moirang it cannot exist earlier than the 12th century A.D. due to obvious reason, or if it were developed from Kabow Tampāk the Moriya city before penetrating to Imphal valley it too cannot exist earlier than the 7th century A.D. There is no image of this cult in the 15th century A.D. even though some later interpolations are found. The legends of Sanāmahi and Pākhangba became popular in the latter part of the 16th century A.D. So it is certain that it must have developed in the 16th century A.D.

The other name of Sanāmahi is *Mahuren* which represents the Tantric form of Sanāmahi. Another but the less potent Tantric form of Sanāmahi is known as *Sanamahi Ipoiba*. These Tantric spirits or gods, as generally believed by the superstitious mass, can be possessed by the physicians who were known as *Lai-sannaba* or *Lai-pub* by means of *lanwa* and further said to be capable of doing immense harm to an individual if they were released on them which was known as *lai-thujinbi*.

In the legends of Ganesh and Kartik, the contest of a race of circling the universe by Ganesh and Kartik, the success of Ganesh who instead of circling the universe circled the throne of the Father or the Guru on the secret advice of the Mother, the incest of Kartik and the Mother, the decision of the Guru conferring the kingship of every house to Ganesh and the kingship of the country to Kartik to console the anger of Kartik, are all systematically fitted into the Sanāmahi-Pākhangba legends. The relation between Kartik and the Mother is shown between Sanāmahi and Leimaren the Mother. It is said that after circling the universe Sanāmahi arrived at the starting point and found his brother occupying the throne of the Guru and became furious and declared that he whosoever advised his brother to take such a course of action would be vanquished if the person was a man or would be taken to wife

if the person was a woman. Then the Guru gave Leimaren the Mother as the consort of Sanāmahi. In several manuscripts this part is omitted and this is perhaps the reason why we get a very confusing relation between Leimaren and Sanāmahi, sometimes as his mother and sometimes as his wife. Since the brother of Sanāmahi knew the intrinsic value of the Father he was fitted the name Pā-khangba meaning 'father understanding'. Thus the brother of Sanāmahi was Pā-khangba and the legend is found to have been described as Sanāmahi Pākhangba phānkhōng kōiba. The vehicle of Sanāmahi is a mole so too the vehicle of Ganesh is also a mole. This legend is very popular throughout India with various local names of Ganesh and Kartik.

The legend became very popular and the scholars of the 16th century A.D. who wanted to project the ancestor of the Poirei kings to the demigod projected Nongtā to be the Pākhangba of the Sanāmahi-Pākhangba legends. The legend taught the common people how Pākhangba was successful in the contest of circling the universe the exact replica of the contest of Ganesh and Kartik with additions and decorations of poetic imagination. In order to match the legends, they possibly destroyed or tempered the accounts containing the parentage of Nongtā. However in some manuscripts like Leithak Leikharol, Theerem Meenam Leeba etc. the name of the father of Nongtā escaped and that too in an allegorical way. Along with the development of other myths different names of Nongtā had been given. Thus we get some eighteen names of Nongtā as discussed in the section on Pākhangba of which the commonest name is Nongtā Lairen Pākhangba meaning 'Nongtā the chief of Lai, father-understanding'. Here the name Lairen is erroneously applied. It is originally the title of the Lai tribe. In all the myths, Pākhangba is made supreme. All such myths are taken within the fold of the Sanāmahi cult. So the ancestors of the Poirei ruling clan became demi-gods and brought in the divine theory of king. Later the king is described to have the grace of Vishnu. Not only the common people the rulers too equally believed it. The cult is so deeply engraved into the minds of the

people that the rulers and their descendants did not swear upon God but did swear upon Pākhangba

Along with the popularity of the myths the Amaivas and the scholars stipulated certain rules of rituals of Sanāmahi and Pākhangba. Thus it looks an indigenous development. The cult was not basically intended to oppose Saivism but it filled in a period of vacuum of religious worship. When the story of Sanāmahi and Pākhangba became popular people wanted to construct a temple of Sanāmahi and to worship him. It was during the latter part of the 16th century A.D. when Khāgamba ascended the throne in the year 1597 A.D. people blamed him of the neglect of Sanāmahi. Even they described the reverse in warfare was solely due to the neglect. They demanded of him to construct a temple for Sanāmahi which had been longing for. The demand was possibly not given proper attention by Khāgamba. It is said that some among his nobles clearly expressed their desire to worship Sanāmahi. The reason for the neglect of Sanāmahi by Khāgamba seems to be that Sanāmahi was the god of the Kege-Moirangs and not of the Poireis where Khāgamba belonged to the Poireis.

At a time when such circumstances were prevailing one male child of Khāgamba born by his wife Nongthil Chaibi was lost. The child was the first issue of Khāgamba. He was given the name Sanā Wāpihal and very much loved by Khāgamba and Nongthil Chaibi. One day when the boy was about 4 or 5 years old pressed his father Khāgamba to accompany him while attending the court and to sit on his lap on the throne. Khāgamba persuaded his dearest child to stay back as it was a forbidden practice and gave the child a strong impetus that when he (Sanā Wāpihal) grew stronger and when he (Khāgamba) died it was he who had to sit on the throne. Sanā Wāpihal was very sportive and he was a living toy of Khāgamba. It so happened one day when Khongal Phāngbi another wife of Khāgamba, who went to a river to take bath, saw the shirts and other cloths and ornaments worn by Sanā Wāpihal hanging on a tree top but the child was not found there. She cried for the child and came running. She informed Khāgamba and

others. On hearing the ghastly news Khāgamba is said to have fallen on to the ground. All people ran and witnessed the hanging of Sanā Wāpihal's cloth on a tree top. On finding her lovely child was lost Nongthil Chaibi fainted. The autocrat monarch took all possible steps to trace the child but could never be found.

Quickly a rumour spread like a wild fire that the child was an incarnation of Sanāmahi. He had gone to the heaven leaving behind his earthly cloths on the top of the tree. It appears the parents did not believe the rumour at first. Several nobles came and reported their dreams in which they saw Sanā Wāpihal left the earth and gone to heaven. They said Sanā Wāpihal was a *shaion* (incarnation) of Sanāmahi. Such information reached the ears of the king in battalions. All these information had led Khāgamba to consult an old man with full of grey hairs named Khommā who lived at Leishāngkhong for using his wisdom in resolving the mystery. Khommā too gave an affirmative answer to the rumour and advised the king and his wife not to weep any more. The text Sanāmahi Naoyom narrates the story in a fantastic way. Thus the life of a loveliest prince ended under the veil of superstition.

All ignorant people believed the rumour and took Sanā Wāpihal was a real incarnation of Sanāmahi. Since this shocking incident Sanāmahi began to be worshipped. It became a house diety. One particular corner of a house had been made the shrine of Sanāmahi and believed that he governs the house and its inmates, and their welfare was on the mercy of Sanāmahi. The Amaivas in turn codified certain rules of procedure in performing the rituals of Sanāmahi. Every year during the period of *Shilhenba* following *Chevaoba* every house was to perform some rituals of Sanāmahi. It may be noted that the crude Solar year of Moriya Phamballacha was of 360 days of 12 months of 30 days each. In order to make up the shortage of 5 to 6 days in a year a function was observed as *Shilhenba*. Thus the cult of Sanāmahi came into existence during the period of Khāgamba. For every important adventure or competition or so, the inmates of the house would pray to Sanāmahi before proceeding his or her activities. The

practice is still followed to this date. It may also be noted that the descendants of the ruling clan did not worship Sanāmahi in their houses. It appears Sanāmahi was the god for commoners. However at present most of them as well as the Brahmīns also worship Sanāmahi. With the emergence of Sanāmahi cult another cult which may be called the Maibi cult got its momentum and engulfed the mass. Details will be discussed in the latter part of this article.

It will be quite appropriate to investigate in a scientific way how Sanā Wāpihal was lost mysteriously. A material body cannot disappear without external agencies. It is impossible to imagine a boy of hardly 1 or 5 years of age would climb up a tree and keep his cloths, anklets etc. on the top of the tree. Since the tree was on the bank of a river, the cause of the death is more likely of drowning. However other possibilities are also not ruled out. Since Sanā Wāpihal was the heir apparent and at the same time was the dearest child of the king it is difficult to imagine how he could come to a river without any attendant. All these circumstances led us to suspect that there was a hand behind, it was a planned murder.

Khagemba had four wives so far available from records. They were (1) Taipombi, (2) Nongthil Chaibi, (3) Khongan Phangbi and (4) one Kongham chanu. Khagemba possibly paid special attention to Nongthil Chaibi because she was mother of his dearest child Sanā Wāpihal. It is reasonable to assume a jealousy and rivalry among the wives developed. Khagemba's association with the child was perhaps an eye-sore to some of his wives. It was certain that Nongthil Chaibi would become the crowned queen if Sanā Wāpihal remained alive. This motivation perhaps led a vicious wife who had some animal dispositions possibly hatched a plan to murder the child. The account is extremely meagre to examine the antecedents of Khongan Phangbi who saw the hanging of the child's cloth first. It is also quite reasonable to suspect Khongan Phangbi to be one of the brains behind the crime. She with her trustiest attendant of the child, who had also the same motive-



trait planned to kill the child by throwing him into the river, and the clothes and other ornaments of child to hung up on the top of a nearby tree. When the crime was accomplished a rumour was to be spread that Sanā Wāpīhal was an incarnation of Sanāmahi and had gone to heaven leaving behind his earthly clothes on the top of a tree. When the fateful day came the attendant carried the child to the river side on some pretext possibly taking bath in the river and undressed the child and immediately threw him into the river. Then the clothes and other ornaments worn by the child were then hung up on the tree. In order to escape any suspect Khongan Phāngbi posed to be the first person to see the clothes of the child hanging on the top of a tree and pretended to be in grief and exerted a selfless search for the child. Thus a superstitious society instead of looking things in its proper perspective converted a heinous crime to the growth of a worship. If real things were detected the course of history of the Sanāmahi cult would have been another.

The Islam religion. Almost parallelly with the last phase of the development of Sanāmahi cult a new religion from eastern parts of Bengal came to this land in the year 1606 A.D. On this date Khagemba defeated and captured the army brought by his younger brother Sānongba who had a disagreement with Khagemba earlier. It is said that a boat belonging to Sānongba was hired by one of the nobles of Khāgemba who was also another brother of Khāgemba for deploying in a boat race. It so happened that the boat broke following a collision in the race. The noble expressed Sānongba of his regret and requested him to accept a new boat for the broken one. Sānongba refused and demanded his original boat in the condition before it was broken. As it was impossible the noble requested again to get the boat repaired and returned. That too Sānongba refused and insisted on his earlier demand. The matter reached the ear of Khagemba, and Khagemba persuaded his younger brother to accept the new boat. That too Sānongba refused and insisted on his earlier absurd demand. Khagemba became enraged for the illogical demand. Khagemba expelled Sānongba from his kingdom. Sānongba fled to eastern Bengal and raised an army at Tarap which was ruled by one Mussalman

Badshah. The army of Sānongba consisted of Indo-Afghan Mussalmans and other tribes and rebelled against his brother. In that engagement Khagemba captured all of them alive and his brother was also pardoned. The Mussalman captives were allowed to settle by marrying Meitei wives. By that period the Meiteis and Mussalmans had intermarriages. The Mussalman continued to follow their own religion without any restriction or obstruction. The Islam religion had no impact on the earlier society. Since our records were either tempered or destroyed, it is difficult to assert with certainty except some vague references of some princes marrying Mussalman girls. The Islam religion was also not in its vigour and had no proselytizing effect. The vigour of Islam in its purer form seems to be from about the beginning of the 20th century A.D. Islam followers now constitute about one tenth of the total Meitei population.

The Ramandi Dharma : In the first quarter of the eighteenth century A.D. a new form of Hinduism came to this land. It was the Ramandi Dharma the cult of Rama. The new form of religion was brought by a religious preacher named Shantidas Gosai from eastern Bengal. He induced king Pamheiba to accept the religion. Later the king agreed to accept the religion inspite of some oppositions from some of his nobles. Later it was decided to declare the new form of religion as the state religion. So in the year 1728 A.D. king Pamheiba proclaimed the Ramandi Dharma a sect of Hinduism as the state religion of his kingdom an epoch making event in history of religion of the Meiteis. By that time there were literature and other records which could give reactions to the free development of *bhakti* cult and to integration. Thus Pamheiba on the advice of Shantidas Gosai ordered for the collection of all such scriptures and records and burnt them ceremoniously. The event is still remembered as *Puran Meithaba* or *Puya Meithaba*. This act, was however an annoyance to some of his nobles, but none could raise their heads against the wish of the monarch. Till that date the Meiteis used to bury their dead bodies except some indications that there was burning of the dead

bodies during the time of Naothingkhong and Khongteekha. The Meiteis began to cremate their dead bodies since Sunday the 20th Lamda (Lunar Lamda), 1646 Saka Era corresponding to Sunday the 29th March, 1725 A.D. It may be mentioned here that the mortal remains of the forefathers of Pamheiba were removed from their respective graves and cremated on the bank of the Ningthi (Chindwin) river with full Vedic rites either on Tuesday the 31st March, 1725 or on Wednesday the 1st April, 1725 A.D.

Concurrently there was another wave of Islam, but it had no weight on the religious outlook of the Meiteis. King Pamheiba was conferred the title *Garib Niwaz* meaning 'benevolent to the poor' by the Muhamadan scholars. His sons were also conferred the title *Shah*. Both the titles were pronounced by the Meiteis as *Garibiniwas* and *Shai* respectively. Even though the Islam had its footing on this land as early as 1606 A.D. it could not impress the king and the people, and perhaps none of the Meiteis were converted to Islam except some sporadic cases as a result of matrimonial relations.

It is worthwhile to investigate what were the *Puyas* or *Purans* that are said to have been burnt ceremoniously by Pamheiba. (All books dealing in the topics of history, accounts of migrating tribes, origin of tribes, accounts of female lines of the ruling group, chronicles, contemporary chronicles, accounts of principalities, military, science, art and literature, religion and worship etc. are called *Puyas* or *Purans*.) After the burning ceremony we have collected so far *Puyas* covering the entire spectrum. As regards religion and worship we have collected every details of the Sanā-mahi cult and its associated myths through *Puyas*. It indicates we have particularly lost nothing in this area.

It is also a fact that Pamheiba burnt down some *Puyas* of religion and worship and possibly *Puyas* dealing in blood lines of the ruling group. The autocrat monarch ordered for the submission of all those *Puyas* relating to the above topics. It is very doubtful to retain *Puyas* of the above topics willfully except by

mistake in the hands of few individuals defying the order of the autocrat monarch to invite his wrath which meant immediate gallows.

Not to speak of the early days, even during the Second World war when a Japanese aircraft flew over Imphal sky dropped some leaflets issued by the I.N.A. One gentleman who happened to get one leaflet, translated the English text in a tea stall while gossiping, was later caught by the army and he was sent to the torture house which by that time known as the Langthabal jail where the gentleman was tortured. Everyone heard of how people were tortured for the slightest fault in that jail. The writer too in his early teens got one such leaflet the legend of which he is still able to recollect is the one sentence 'Establish Swaraj'. On hearing the information that he whosoever possessed the said leaflet would be caught, and people became panicky and destroyed the last particle of the leaflet.

On the other hand we have not collected any *Puya* dealing in Tantric literature, human sacrifice, Buddhism and Saktism except some vague references here and there. Only one copper plate inscription describing the rituals of Devi performed by king Khongtekcha was discovered in the early part of the 20th century A.D. We have lost *Puyas* dealing in the Kege principality and Bangal principality. All these investigations indicate that we have not recovered even a single *Puya* relating to this area of topic. We have lost *Puyas* dealing in the Bangals except some references here and there in Ningthourol Lambuba. Even the place of Chingurembi the Mayang Leima who became the queen of Naothingkhong is not found in the royal chronicle. We have also lost the *Puyas* dealing in her marriage, her sons except the literary piece called Chingurembi Khonglup describing her *awunnais* or attendants which escaped the purge somehow or the other.

The Ramandi Dharma though belonged to some sects of Hinduism based on *bhakti* cult opposed Tantricism and Saktism. So it is more probable that Pamheiba burnt down those scriptures relating to racial origin and Tantric literature which could bring harm and

disintegrity rather than the literature on the cult of Sanāmahi. It is a fact found in history that Hinduism accommodates and absorbs other indigeneous worships within its own fold in course of Hinduisation unlike Christianity. On the other hand if Shantidas nourished the Tantric culture and the rapidly progressing Saktism aspect of Saivism which is evidently seen from the activities of *churanthabas* and *thoks* who were people of some religious organisations, who moved about or people sent by the nobles or kings, to lift children and who robbed by cheating others respectively in the service of Kālī (the Sakti form of Devi,) his mission for the propagation of the *bhakti* cult would have been thwarted. More details of *churanthaba* and *thok* are discussed in the section on Meiteilon or Manipuri language. In these circumstances Saktism and Tantricism were his foes but not the cult of Saṅmahi. This is also confirmed from the fact that when Pamheiba introduced Ramandi Dharma there was no prohibition on the worship of Sanāmahi in every house. Each house continued to perform the rituals of Sanāmahi during the period of *shilhenba*. It has been continuing to this date. However the importance of the state temple of Saṅmahi seems to have been reduced. The Indo-Aryan Brahmins also worshipped Sanāmahi as their house deity. It is quite reasonable that certain modifications could have been introduced. The offering of beef and pork with wine could have been prohibited as they were not the food for the upholders of the *bhakti* cult. On the other hand the Sanamahi cult moved towards the fold of Hinduism. Except some indigeneous components the rituals of Sanāmahi resemble Hindu rituals. It is also said that during the absence of Shantidas possibly outside Manipur some of his Meitei disciples destroyed the image of Sanāmahi made of bronze. When Shantidas returned, he found the image of Sanāmahi was destroyed which he did not approve. He ordered for the immediate restoration of the image. Thus the image of Sanāmahi was restored, which some *Puyas* commented as if the fear of Shantidas lest the wrath of Sanāmahi should fall on him. It is also said that Shantidas Gosai used to pay homage to the Sanāmahi deity. It is therefore very unlikely

that Pamheiba burnt down the scriptures of indigenous Sanāmahi worship as commonly believed. Since our discovery of the lost history it is now fully revealed the circumstances leading to the burning down of *puyas*. So we conclude that Pamheiba burnt down *puyas* relating to Tantric culture and Saktism including human sacrifice, and possibly some accounts of racial origins. The only remnants of the Ramandi cult visible to this date is the Hanuman temple of Mahavalli on the left bank of the Imphal river at Imphal. People use to pay homage to that temple for the health of their sickly children specially on Tuesdays.

The Vaisnavism · It is said that some Vaisnavite Brahmin scholars from Bengal visited the court of king Jai Singh (1763-98 A D.) in the early part of his reign. They had brought with them the latest form of Vaisnavism a sect of Hinduism which had the concept of Radha in the Krishna cult. These Brahmin scholars induced the king to change over the state religion of Ramandi Dharma to Vaisnavism and after much deliberations the king accepted it. King Jai Singh himself became a devout Vaisnavite and he was later known as Rajarshi Bhagyachandra. It may be noted that there was Vaisnavism in the Ahom court of Assam which did not have the concept of Radha in the Krishna cult. It is quite likely that king Jai Singh had the concept of Vaisnavism earlier from the Ahoms in course of his visit of the Ahom kingdom.

Along with Ramandi cult and Vaisnavism the caste system got its footing, the untouchability developed. The Chakpas who did not embrace the new sect of Hinduism had been degraded to an inferior caste. Rigorous religious rituals followed. Despite such religious taboos the community flourished for more than two and a half centuries. The court of kings became Brahmin ridden.

The Revivalist movement · Then followed a wave of revivalism. The revivalists first claim that they are not Hindus; they had a religion suppressed by the Hindus. They call themselves Meetei Marup or so, but the orthodox Meitei Hindus contemptuously refer to them by the nickname Sanāmahi. One of the salient factors for the growth of revivalism is the excesses committed by

the unscrupulous and greedy Brahmins. They could not give proper religious education to the mass, rather they exploited the people through religious rituals. At one time they also practised the 'sending of flowers' as done by the *Ari* lords of Burma before *Anawrahtha*. The mass became disgusted with the greedy Brahmins. The hatred for the Brahmins was transferred on to the religion.

The move for revivalism started from about the beginning of the 20th century A.D. but little progress seems to be there in the beginning owing to severe strictures from the royal court. Later the move was first visibly launched by Naoriya Phullo who belonged to the Meitei community settled in the Cachar district of Assam. Thus Naoriya Phullo may be said as the father of revivalism. He was a man of strong will power, and felt that it was not the language as imposed by the Brahmins but the purity of the mind that has ultimate relation with *Yabiren* (Paramatma). He was against the imposition of Sanskrit to the illiterate mass by the Brahmins in the rituals of religious worship. He felt that Meiteilon (Manipuri language) has every word to express them. He uttered *Hoong Sidava* in lieu of *Iswara*. It appears he did not deviate from the Hindu way of life. When he died he was not buried but cremated. The supporters of Naoriya Phullo called him '*Laininghal*'. As time passed on several revivalist groups emerged. Some groups openly criticised Naoriya Phullo for being a moderator. Some have gone to extreme fanaticism.

The move of the revivalists has both merits and demerits. In the first instance it washed away to a great extent the casteism—the caste system among the same caste and among the different castes. There has been inter-marriages between the different strata of the same caste, between Brahmins and non-Brahmins in violation of *pratilam* or *anulam vivah* of the Hindu law, between different religions, races or tribes with the exception of Mussalmans with full social recognition. The problem of common dining between different groups of social strata has been practically solved. In

short the movement has done away to a great extent the social malady and other religious taboos.

On the other hand the movement also does equally harm. They criticise the rituals, and the way of Hindu life openly even though they claim they are not Hindus which is forbidden by the constitution of India. They criticise Brahmins and other non-Mongoloid origins in the 'eitei' setup by the nick name *meeyan* meaning 'mixed man'. This form of criticism hurts the sentiments of others and brings a disharmony for the healthy development. They also criticise Ningthemchas the ruling clan for being the progenitor of the new form of Hinduism as the state religion in a literary way. The writer happened to read a book in clandestine circulation. The writing was horrible. He whosoever happens to read the book, specially the adolescents there is no reason why the statue of king Jai Singh (Bhagyachandra) in Khwairamban Bazar should not be molested. Of course there seems to be some truth in the text of the said book but for its excesses it has lost its value.

Some revivalists feed the young minds with false informations. They would present them whatever the way of Hindu life the other pole is the classic Meitci. Thus it gives a serious threat to the healthy development of being well accomplished man and woman of society. Taking the advantage of the revivalists movements, some hooligans resort to offences like setting on fire of Hindu temples, throwing of filthy things on religious procession of the Hindus, stealing of Hindu idols from temples by committing burglary and burning them. In one occasion there had been a rumour that one Hindu idol was stolen from a temple by committing burglary in the night and placed on a river bank with a fishing rod tied on one hand and a playcard reading "Our days are gone" pasted on the back. The Hindus became agitated but were tolerant.

Apart from the attack on the religion they also attack the language. They wanted, as they claimed, Meiteilon to be free from



*Mayanglon* meaning here words of Indo-Aryan origin. One organisation while celebrating the black day of *Puran Meitaba* is alleged to have burnt down Hindu scriptures ceremoniously in a function presided over by one VIP. The matter became a serious concern. Some articles in some papers outside Manipur appeared on the topic. The gravity on the situation deepened more and more, however the VIP denied the charge.

The *Maibi* cult : The *Maibi* cult appears to have gained momentum along with the wave of revivalism for sometime. The cult of *Maibi* pushes the mind of the people still deeper into the region of darkness. The *Maibis* were formerly woman priests or priestesses who foretold future happenings from the reading or analysis of their dreams. As time passed on they foretold future happenings deliriously. The flickering minds of the *Maibis*, their illiteracy, their lack of general knowledge led to the development of modern *Maibis*. The *Maibis* with their *laibao*s can make a flickering mind to insanity. If we look scientifically at what the *Maibis* are, it is possible to reveal our ignorance. *Maibis* are but mentally diseased personalities. They are suffering from a mental disease called schizophrenia. When the disease is onset, the individual shivers with shills, sometimes with choking throat, sometimes with irrelevant talks specially when suggested to as a result of conflict between the ego and the other personality. At such moments the individual sees things and hears voices by hallucination. People take what the individual talks at such moments as the wishes of god or voices of god. By hallucination what the individual can see or hear is the mental formation stored in his or her mind from the experiences in his or her life. It is impossible to see things or hear voices which he or she had not seen or heard in his or her life. At the most there is possibility of a *Maibi* describing the past but not the future. To be unknown of future is the healing force of nature. We have no record of *Maibi*, from any source so far available, forecasting the nuclear fission over Hiroshima and Nagashaki.

The said disease often attacks those people who are emotionally imbalanced and have very weak will power. The disease

is cured without any treatment when the *Maibi* becomes old and loses all worldly anxieties. This is the reason why we do not get old *Maibis* capable of developing the symptoms of the disease, which we say, *Maibi lai tongdare*. The onset of the symptom of the disease can also be induced to the diseased person by special techniques.

Christianity : In the beginning of the 20th century A.D. Christianity came to this land. It appears the valley was not fertile for its growth, it moved towards the hills. It is said that in 1907 A.D. a village lying on the southern border first embraced Christianity. It then gradually spread to other parts of the hills by the activities of Christian missionaries with evangelical zeals. The Christian missionaries constructed schools in the remote inaccessible parts of the territory and tried to educate the mass. For such selfless sacrifices they got the return. Now Christianity has become the second largest religion in the state.

## THE NAMING OF THE LAND MANIPUR

There are different theories about the origin of the name Manipur under consideration. Some scholars say that this land is the very land Manipur as mentioned in the Mahabharata Epic where king Babrubahan was born. But these groups of scholars have been criticised by other scholars. Some scholars say that the name Manipur was given during the reign of king Pamheiba (Garib Niwaz) in the early part of the 18th century A.D. and further they feel that the name was a taboo of the Hindu Mayangs who brought Ramandi Dharma the Rama cult, during the reign of the said king.

A Manipuri account named *Sating Sakok* a manuscript says, 'near Nungoibi between Taipongthong and Nungoibi there was a stone with supernatural power known as *mani* a precious gem stone, on account of it the place is known as Manipur'.

In some fabulous accounts like *Sakok Lamlen*, the land is said to have given different names in different periods. In the period of *Hayee Chak* meaning the first millennium the name of this land was *Tillikoktom Ahanba*, in the *Khunung Chak* i.e. the 2nd millennium it was known as *Mirapongthoklam*, in the *Langba Chak* i.e. in the third millennium it was called *Tillikok Leikoiren*, and in the *Konna Chak* i.e. the fourth and the last millennium it changed its name to *Muwapalli*.<sup>1</sup> The final name of this land according to this account is *Mayai Koiren Poirei Namihak Saroupung*.

In another fabulous account named *Soubon Yairembi* the name of this land successively beginning from the first millennium to the fourth was *Muwapalli*, *Wangban Taothong Mayung Korba*, *Lamthong Maphei Lakpa*, and *Poirei Meitei*.

The above accounts cannot be taken as the sole authentic source from which the ancient name of Manipur can be ascertained

1 In the geography of Ptolemy (c. 150 A.D.) the area of Kabow Tampak is shown with the name *Maureora Petropolis* which seems to have derived from the words like *Maurya-palli*, *Moitya-palli*, *Muwa-palli* etc.

but they can supplement other sources. The manuscript *Sakok lamlen* seems to have mixed the names in confusion. The name *Tillikoktom Ahanba* and *Tillikok* were the name of Kabow valley and *Mirapongthoklam* was a coined name of Imphal valley more precisely the Upper Iril valley. The names *Tillikoktom Ahanba* and *Tillikok* are more or less the same word and the word *Tillikoktom Ahanba* may also be written as *Tillikoktom-hal* which seems to be a Sakiyan formation and perhaps the first known name ever assigned to Kabow valley by the Sakyas at about 200 B.C.

When *Tillikoktom-hal* was left by the Sakyas and it began to be ruled by their Moriya clan, it probably assumed the name *Moriyapalli*\* or *Mauryapalli* or *Muwapalli*, of which *Muwapalli* is a phonetic variant of the word *Mauryapalli*. The suffix part *palli* of the above names, means 'the ridge of an elevated earthen structure' like that of an earthen barrage, is a living Manipuri word and perhaps a Maurya formation. The earlier name of Sri Lanka (Ceylon) is said to be Tamba-panni where *panni* and *palli* are the same word, when the Mauryan culture began to grow there in the closing part of B.C. More details may be seen in the section on Meiteilon or Manipuri language. It may be noted that the name Tambapanni had further changed to Shing-hal, Lanka and finally to Sri Lanka. The word *palli* of *Muwapalli* and *Tambapalli* are of the same formations. Again the suffix part *hal* of *Shing-hal* and *Tillikoktom-hal* are also of the same formation. The name *Mauryapalli* or *Muwapalli* seems to have existed from about the first century B.C. when the Sakyas left for Sangassarattha the name given to the Tagaung country of the Upper Irrawaddy valley.

The city of Moriya, Ptolemy's Maureora Petropolis was given the name *Kabow tampak* when the Senbi-Kabow began to settle on that valley from about the 14th century A.D. On the other hand the northern part of Imphal valley which was also given the name *Mirapongthoklam* assumed the name *Poirei* and with the emergence of the name *Poirei* the importance of Moriya city gradually diminished and the name *Poirei* became known as if the

name of the whole country. Thus the name of the country before it assumed the name Manipur, was successively Tillikok-tom-hal, Muwapalli and Poirei.

So far the names found in the fabulous accounts are mainly interpreted by different scholars for Imphal valley. As discussed in earlier sections the first name popularly assigned to any part of the Imphal valley was Poirei. The sway of the Poireis was mainly confined to a small area upto about 1000 A.D. which comprised of Kangla-tongbi and upper Iril valley and in course of time it expanded.

The land of Kangla was called Kang-lei, and in literary accounts it is frequently used as vocabulary. In the latter part of the 18th century A.D. king Jai Singh (Bhagyachandra) mentions Kangleipak as recorded in the Cheitharol Kumbaba. Some scholars claim the name of this land as Kangleipak while others say it was Poireipak.

Different tribes inhabiting the valley gave different names according to the name of the tribes or their fancies. Funans called their area as Funan, Khunjans as Khunjan and so on. The Marems who inhabited on the Loijing ranges gave the name of the valley as Moiram, the Bangals who inhabited at Lamangdong called Manipura.

The Burmese gave the name Kathe, the Shans called Cassay or Kahse, the Ahoms and Tripuris gave the name Makhlee, the Kacharis called Mogolei and so on. There were well formed boundary of Kathe or Cassay as seen from the Burmese and the Pongs (Mau Shans). The eastern limit of the Kathe was the hill ranges running parallel between the Mu river and Ningthu river, the northern limit was Samjouk to Loijiri (Noijiri), to the south Kale and Chin hills, and to the south-west from Chin hills to the border of modern Tripura. The land defined by the above boundary was the land of Kathe or Cassay. The eastern portion of the Cachar plains was under the sway of the Poireis while the Barail range was the northern limit of the Mogoleis.

The Mahabharata Epic mentions a country called Manipur, specially in connection with the Aswamedha sacrifice. It is needless to investigate the historical authenticity of the epic, but it will be of great value to understand the belief and thought of the writer. Mahabharata is said to have been written by Krishna Dwipayana Veda Vyasa whose date is not known with any degree of certainty. The original work of Vyasa appears to be not so voluminous. Different anecdotes have been interpolated from time to time by different scholars upto the 9th century A.D. of which the chapter on the Aswamedha Parva may be mentioned. It is said that a scholar of the 8th century A.D. named Jaimini wrote the critical composition of Aswamedha Parva of the Mahabharata epic. It is perhaps the creative imagination of the scholar on political informations available at his disposal that he incorporated the kingdom of Manipur in that Parva. It is difficult to say if the Aswamedha Parva was in the earlier text prior to Jaimini. There are instances in Hindu scriptures of such interpolations of which it is worthwhile to mention the existence of Srimati Radhika or simply Radha in the Vaisnavite scriptures. Radha is not found in earlier scriptures like Sreemad Bhagavat. It is most probably interpolated in the 9th century A.D. by the Vaisnavite scholars a fictitious character in such a way that Krishna without Radha is unthinkable.

Jaimini in his Aswamedha Parva has given a description of Manipur. According to him, the people of Manipur were worshippers of Vishnu, used wheeled carts, and built great houses. They were under the Brahmanical rule and the women were faithful to their husbands. In the hilly regions of Manipur people whom the Aryans called *Rakshasas* lived and they used bones as their ornaments. They used trees as their dwelling houses and hence he gave the name *Briksha-desh* meaning 'tree country' to the hilly regions where these people lived. In the text of Aswamedh Parva it is also stated that the sacrificial horse of Arjuna went to the kingdom of Mayura Dhaja from Manipur.

There are different sets of scholars who interpret about the location of the Mahabharata Manipur. One set of scholars asserts

their views that the present kingdom of Manipur is the very Manipur of the Mahabharata while some scholars subscribe their views that the kingdom of the Mahabharata Manipur was in Orissa, and so on.

The interpretation of the word Mayura Dhaja according to these scholars is that he was a king named from the fact that he used a 'banner of peacock feather', and so on. The Maurya dynasty that flourished in the 3rd century B.C. is said to have derived its name from the hypothesis that the family to which Chandragupta Maurya belonged to was a peacock farmer. The word Maurya is derived from the word Mayura meaning peacock. Thus Chandragupta Maurya may also be called Mayura Chandragupta.

Taking into the Burmese account, the Sakiyan king Dhaja is said after staying for sometime in Moriya (Kabow valley) moved to Tagaung in the upper Irrawaddy valley. Dhaja Raja could have belonged to the Maurya clan of the Sakyas. The period of Dhaja Raja is estimated to be in the third century A.D. though in the Burmese account it is entered as 523 B.C. More details may be seen in the section on Haokap, Chungsang, Khunpham and Ngangcheng. The name of Dhaja Maurya may also be written as Mayura Dhaja. The ancient kingdom of Manipur and the kingdom of Mayura Dhaja were adjacent kingdoms. Towards India, to the west of Tagaung was the Upper Chindwin Valley known at a later period as Kabow valley. The ancient seat of administration or capital of the kingdom of Upper Chindwin valley was at Moriya or the Kabow valley proper of to-day lying to the south-east corner of present political Manipur and the adjoining valley. The kingdom of Moriya came into existence from about the 2nd century B.C., first established by Abhi Raja a Sakiyan king who came to the present political Burma through Arakan. The city of Moriya flourished till it was subjugated under pressure of cross human movements following the invasions of Ko-lo-feng and I-mou-sun on Tibet and Burma in the latter part of the 8th century A.D. The Sakiyan tribes brought with them the Brahmanical culture and they were

non-Buddhists. The western hills of Moriya ( now south-eastern hills of present Manipur ) was uninhabited lands while the southern hills became habitated from about the 8th century A.D. mainly by the Chin and Lai tribes. Details may be seen in the section of Kege, Senbi-Kabow.

Since the kingdom of Mayura Dhaja was geographically adjacent to the kingdom of ancient Manipur, since the horse of the Aswamedha sacrifice moved from Manipur to the kingdom of Mayura Dhaja, and since the culture of the ancient kingdom of Manipur was pre-Buddhist culture there is every reason to say that the kingdom of Manipur as conceived by the 8th or 9th century A D Indians as reflected in the Aswamedha Parva of the Mahabharata was the 'Moriya Kingdom'. Moreover the kingdom of Mayura Dhaja was noted for its Naga culture in the first half of the first millennium of the Christian era. It is stated in the Glass Palace Chronicle that while ascending the throne of Sangassaranttha i.e. Tagaung Dhaja Raja was accompanied by the Nāga king on the right. The Nāga culture has nothing to do with the Naga tribes inhabiting the adjoining hills of Manipur and they are not to be confused with the tribe who followed the Nāga culture. As discussed in the earlier sections the name Naga is derived from the Assamese word Noka. Because of the confusion arising out of the similarity of names many scholars took the Naga tribes for the tribes who followed the Nāga traditions as found in the Mahabharata and others. Nāga and Naga are two different words of which the former is accented with a heavy tone in the first vowel whereas in the latter word both the vowels are accented in heavy tones. As discussed in the section Racial and Political History, the kingdom of Manipur had two nuclei, one was at Kabow Valley proper of to-day in the Upper Chindwin Valley while the second one was in the Upper Iril Valley of the Imphal plateau. The former nucleus was founded by Abhi Raja the Sakiyan king at about the 2nd century B.C. whereas the second one was founded by Poireiton another Sakiyan prince believed to be a descendant of Abhi Raja at about 800 A.D. The Manipur



kingdom and its sway is shown in the map appearing in the section on Racial and Political History. The kingdom is now sabred into two portions. The south-eastern portion is in Burma and the northern portion diminished in size due to the British pressure is now in India. The name Manipur is retained to the Indian side only.

Whenever we speak of Manipur of to-day we generally project our mind to Imphal Valley. It is certainly a wrong conception. The ancient kingdom of Manipur was centred around Kabow Valley proper expanding its sway over a large area. The name Kabow Valley appeared on the scene from about the 14th century A.D. when the Senbi-Kabow settled in Moriya. Some Moriyans or Sakiyan tribes along with the Keges moved to the north-west of their habitat while some of them moved towards the north and the south. The Kabow inhabitants of Kabow valley were known as Meitei-Kabow.

It is almost certain that the people of Manipur did not call their country Manipur. They used to call by local names like Moriya, Poiri etc. The fame of the ancient kingdom of Manipur must have reached India. Hence the Indian scholars incorporated this kingdom into the framework of the great epic Mahabharata. Thus the 8th and 9th century A.D. people of India esteemed high of Manipur which is also reflected in the Ballala Charita of Bengal. The text however cannot be taken as a historical account but the event of writing the text is a recorded history. The text was written in the year 1510 A.D. by Anandabhatta a Brahmin scholar of South Indian origin on the advice or order of Buddhimanta Khan a Muslim ruler of Nadia in Bengal. This Brahmin scholar of the early 16th century A.D. perhaps conceived the idea of the kingdom of Manipur ruled by a powerful prince descendant of Arjuna the Pandava. It is stated that in the Aswamedha Parva that Arjuna the invincible was defeated in the hands of the Manipur prince Babrubahan. The said Brahmin scholar must have this background of thought. Secondly the descendants of the Senas of Bengal were expelled from the Imphal plateau by the Keges

(Kika-tse) at about 1260 A.D. When the news of the defeat of the Senas reached Nadia, it probably passed on to legends. With this background Anandabhata took the Sena king to be Ballala Sena and described 'repeatedly defeated in the neighbourhood of Manipur'. In the 16th century A.D. the kingdom of Manipur was directed towards Imphal Valley. So the scholar inserted the word 'neighbourhood'.

So it is vividly seen that from about the 8th century A.D. if not earlier the Indian people conceived the kingdom of Moriya as the kingdom of Manipur. The Sena prince while moving towards Mantara had this much of conception. From Pasa (Basa) they moved towards the north and reached Imphal Valley who knowingly or not knowingly took it to be some parts of the kingdom of Manipur, called the land Manipur. The presence of the Moriya princes close to Lamangdong also probably confirmed their earlier belief. The Moriyian capital by that time was probably at Ithai only a few kilometres towards the south-east of Lamangdong. The Sakiyan prince who ruled the Moriyian subjects by that period was probably the next predecessor of Moriya Oinu Seng Raja (Oinu Seng-ba-la-cha).

The name Manipur is thus seen to be neither the invention of the religious preacher who brought the Ramandi Dharma nor the invention of the modern Indian tribes. It is the Indian classic name of Moriya (Kabow Valley) and later of Pourei.

Among the Indians, it is possible to have scholars who claimed Manipur was in Orissa and equally there were scholars who upheld present Manipur was the kingdom of Manipur of the Mahabharata. It is therefore not equally wrong to say that the Indian Brahmins in particular who came to this land from the middle of the 15th century A.D. were at least the upholders of the second view. They migrated to this land purposefully to avert the Muslim pressure of that period. With increasing influence of the Indo-Aryans the land became officially called Manipur in the early part of the 18th century A.D. during the reign of Garib Niwaz.

We can guess some similarity of names of the Sakiyan princes to that of the princes of the ancient Manipur as found in the

Mahabharata like Chitra-sen, Chitra-ratha, Chitra-bhanu and even the name of princess like Chitra-angda. It appears the rulers of the Mahabharata Manipur were fond of the word 'Chitra'. Again Madhu Chitra was one of the grandsons of Abhi Raja the Sakiyan king, who moved to Kale south of Moriya from Tagauag according to the Burmese chronicle. It is not known with certainty who the successive rulers of Moriya were from about the 2nd century B C. It is very likely that there were rulers of Moriya whose names were associated with the word Chitra and became legendary figures. The legends probably passed on to India and the Indian scholars of the 8th century A. D. interpolated in the Mahabharata epic.

A section of people who felt that the name Manipur was an imposition of the Indian Hindus whom they called Mayangs, on the Meeteis and wanted to change the name to Kangleipak, raised in the last decade a strong move full of sound and fury but possibly ended in a fiasco adopting a consensus of adding several adjectives to the proposed name which perhaps was paradoxically not palatable to most of them.

There is no historical record how the name Imphal is given to the latest capital city of the Poirais. It seems there were 'congregations or plenty of houses' or 'beautiful houses' by the 18th century A. D. in the northern part of present Imphal. The name Imphal is perhaps derived by compounding two words namely, *yum* and *phal*, where *yum* means 'house' and *phal* or *phan* means 'plenty' or 'beautiful'. Even to this date Imphal is occasionally pronounced as Yum-phal. In old Manipuri language *yum* is spelt as *im* or *ym* and sometimes as *yom*. The Pali formation of the word *yum* is *giyom*. The old Manipuri word for the Burmese Buddhist temple is *kiyong* which 'Symes in his embassy to Ava spelt as *kioum*'. In modern period or present period Yum-phal is pronounced as Imphal or it could have been the old pronunciation *Yimphal*. It may be noted that the other words for *yum* are *maral* and *mongba* which are the words of the different tribes constituting the Meeteis.

In a like wise manner there were plenty of beautiful houses belonging to the Mayang Pasis, Bangals and proto-Bangals who were grouped as 'Mayangs' in later period to the east of the Loktak lake. Hence the Poireis gave the name Mayang-yum-phal to that area

## THE ORIGIN OF THE NAME MEITEI

Different theories, propositions and inventions have been postulated on the origin of the appellation Meitei. Again there are two schools of thought on the name itself. One school of thought sticks to the spelling MEITEI while the other claims the spelling MEETEI. The difference lies in the first syllable Mei- or Mee- of the word. Apparently the difference comes from the loss of history. In several books, the upholders of the sound Meitei would write Meitei, while the other group would write Meetei.

We cannot give a positive decision, but it appears that most revivalists prefer the name Meetei. We will investigate why they prefer the name Meetei. There is a belief that a section of Ningthemchas, the ruling clan and a religious preacher destroyed their earlier religion which some of them claimed to have been older than 1396 B.C. and imposed them Vaisnavism a Hindu sect. Some young scholars feel the name is an indication of 'Tai-man' that would correspond to 'Mee-Tai', and in their search for Pakhangba they further feel that Pakhangba could have belonged to a Shan tribe. So they feel that Mee-tai is a correct name of the Ningthemchas. When this view was current some people seem to be not happy, and in support of that theory they exhibited old manuscripts which looked very old and worm eaten. The manuscripts neither indicate the name of the writer nor the date of writing. The contents of most of these manuscripts are of fabulous stories. If we examine them carefully such manuscripts are found to have contained much incoherences. There is no synchronization of periods. Among such manuscripts a fabulous story is found on the creation of man. The essence of which is that the Supreme Guru creates a living being resembling his image of which is said *imi*. So from *imi* it comes to *mee* the man and so on. If we leave them as fables there is nothing wrong. But some people take it as a dictum. It must be borne in mind that the word *mee* is in

existence long before the human habitation on the valley of Imphal. It is a word of most of the Tibeto-Burmans and other Mongoloids. Some of them further feel from different records which describe the Ningthemchas as Meiteis, that there was a tribe called Meitei to which the Ningthemchas belonged.

Since the name Meitei was the name of the Ningthemchas, it is very likely, taking the advantage of the spelling *Meetai* they invented a theory that the name was derived from *Mee-Atei* meaning 'other man' indicating people other than the Meitei. From *Mee-Atei* it changed to *Meetei*. So the name *Meetei* is for the mass other than the ruling clan. Some of the upholders of the name *Meetei* however, appear to be very aggressive in their propaganda for the popularisation of the name *Meetei*, while some others simply believe the name to be correct one without any prejudice to others.

On the other hand the upholders of the name Meitei mainly stretch their claims from conventions, some better compiled books written in old language and common uses besides folk tales and traditions of other tribes. They also exhibit some old manuscripts which meet the same fate as the above.

Some scholars feel from the account that there was a Tai tribe called 'Moi' which lost a link from the early Christian era. So they believe that these Moi tribes came to Manipur and settled there. Hence the name Meitei is derived from the name *Moi-tai*. At the first instance it is very tempting as suggested by Bryn Hugson that the name Meitei was derived possibly from the two words *Moi* and *Tai*. It may be mentioned that the *Moi* tribes are found in the hilly jungles of Cambodia living as savage wild tribes. More over literary sources of Manipur do not mention the coming of *Moi* tribes to this land.

Upto 1200 A.D. the name Meiti was non-existent. There was no common name for all the tribes inhabiting the valley of Imphal. Each major tribe inhabited in certain specific areas. Such areas may be described as the principality of that tribe. The name of such principality was the synchronously given the name of the tribe. For example Moirang principality was the seat of the Moirangs,

Khuman principality was the seat of the Khumans etc. These principalities were known as the land of Moiranga, the land of Khumans etc. In these names the Moirangs, the Khamans were the names of tribes. To the northern side of Imphal valley there was a major tribe known as Poirei. It has been discussed that the name Poirei is derived from the name of Poireiton the founder of the Chakkhan dynasty. The Poireis constituted by the tribes who belonged to amalgamated neo-Tibetan tribes namely Lei-nung<sup>1</sup> Kham-nung, Khu-nung etc. besides the Chakkhas. There was a settlement on the foothills now known as Loi-ching or Loi-bi-ching beginning from Lamangdong to Moitangpok. The tribes who inhabited these foothills belonged to a Tai tribe known as Loi. The Chakpas were their associate tribes. This tribe began to inhabit the southern part of the stated areas from about 1100 A.D. Different other tribes called them by the name Loi, Tai and Chakpa. When these tribes began to settle the Poireis called them Loi and when they had social contact at a later period they were called Chakpa a name of a clan or associate tribe of Loi by the Poireis. A little later than the Loi another tribe of proto-Sino-Tibetan origin arrived and settled on the north-west of Lamangdong on the Loi-jing range. This particular Tibeto-Burman tribe of proto-Sino-Tibetan origin was called Marems. The Marems came to their habitat on the Loi-jing range by the southerly route. When they first saw the valley i.e. the valley of Imphal from the top of Loi-jing they were possibly charmed by the beauty of the emerald valley full of birds. They gave the name *Langmei-hen Moiram* (*Moi-lam*) to the emerald valley. The meaning of it is 'Langmei-plenty-sun-land' and literally it means 'The land of the Sun with plenty of Langmeis'. In the dialect of Marems they called the sun *Moi* and land *ram*. Hence *Moiram* means 'land of the sun', and *langmei* is a kind of bird with beautiful feathers. The word *hen* of *Langmei-hen* may also be rendered as 'plenty or beautiful Langmei'. In that case the phrase may be rendered as 'Land of the Sun with beautiful or plenty of Langmeis'. As the valley is on the east of Loi-jing it is probable

that they had associated the valley with the rising of the Sun. The Marems gave names of other places associated with the word 'Moi' lying in the valley like Moi-ohaching, Moi-ching, Moi-tangpok, and to places lying to the west of their settlement like Moi-ta-lok which was given with the association of 'setting of the sun' something like 'the gorge through where the sun sets'. It is also most likely that they gave the name Moi-tang-pok of present sound derived from earlier sound like Moi-Tai-pok. The Marems used to call the Loi, Lai, Chakpa and other Tai by the name Tai. Hence the Marems probably gave the name Moi-Tai to the tribes of Tai origin inhabiting the foothills close to them. It is believed that subsequent other immigrants also used to call these tribes Moi-Tai as transferred from the Marems.

The Bangal and proto-Bangals who came by the southerly route had contact with the Marems first and accordingly they also used to call the tribes inhabiting the foothills by the name Moi-Tai. The Bangals could not differentiate between a Moi-Tai and a non-Moi-Tai from their Mongoloid appearances and used to call Mongoloid inhabitants of the valley by the name Moi-tai. Thus Poireis were also called Moi-tai by the Bangals. Any new immigrant arriving by the southern route like the Moirang (Mahui) used to call the Poireis by the name Poirei-Moitai to differentiate from the real Moitai.

From Moi-tai it change to Meitei. Before changing to Meitei the sound Moitai probably lasted for decades. When the Bangals used to round the consonants with an ending sound of 'o', the Tibeto-Burmans and other Mongoloids used pronounce them with a short 'a'. Thus a Bangal word of Moitai (মৈতাই) would have been pronounced by other Mongoloids as Meitai (মৈতাই). Hence from Moitai it changed to Meitai and finally to Meitei. The name of Poirei to all incoming tribes was thus known as Meitei. With the political expansion of the Poireis they also became as Poirei-Meitei transferring possibly from Moirang. When most of the tribes came under the hegemony of the Poireis all became to be known as Meiteis of which the Moirangs were the last.



Pandit Atombapu Sharma feels the appellation Meitei which he writes Mitei is derived from the word Mithila or Meithila holding the view that the Meiteis were from Meithila, mainly from the similarity of the pre-Buddhist way of life of the early Meiteis and the people of Meithila. But the great pandit gives no evidence of his contention. The original site or location of Meithila was in Bihar. It may be pointed out that with increasing influence of the Indian culture in South-East Asia the state of Yun-nan was very commonly known as Meithila or Mithila. The Keges who moved by about the above period to Moriya seem to have conceived the word Meithila or Mithila. If the word Meitei is to derive from Meithila it is more likely that the Keges brought the word with them. It seems the great pandit prefers the name Mitei (Meetei) to Meitei.

## THE CONSTRUCTION OF LOST HISTORY

One of the most important parts of the early history of this land is the history of the Moriya principality which the Poirais called Keke (Kege). The Kege principality was a part of the Moriya kingdom. The history of the Kege principality is lost except some references here and there in accounts like Ningthourol Lambuba. The text mentions names of some important persons belonging to the Kege principality. The kingdom of Moriya flourished from about 200 B C to about 800 A D. and since then people of Moriya began to disperse under the pressure of cross movement of other tribes following the invasion of Tibet and Pyu by Ko-lo-feng and I-mou-shun the Nan Chao kings. Perhaps the last phase of dispersal of people belonging to Moriya was accomplished at about the latter part of the 11th century A.D. as an impact of exodus of Austro-Asiatic people like Mon, Khmer, Funan, Maring, Senpi etc. who passed through Moriya on their way from the north of Thaton in Burma and western Thailand to Manipur, Nagaland and Assam following the invasion of Thaton by Anawrahtha in 1057 A D. and the forced transfer of almost the whole of Mon population to Pagan and other political upheavals and natural calamities. The Senpi (Senbi) began to occupy the valley which became later known as Kabow valley from about this period. The Kabows later joined them and they were amalgamated. The amalgamated name became known as Senpi-Kabow.

We have very little account of the Moriya kingdom since its inception except its reference in the epic Mahabharata as Manipur. The epic reflects a high standard of civilization with brave rulers of the kingdom. Characters like Chitrasena, Chitraratha, Chitrahhanu etc were perhaps some of their prominent rulers who ruled in the first half of the first millenium of the Christian era before the 8th century A. D. Since the chapter which deals in the

Aswamedha sacrifice known as Aswamedha Parva was interpolated by Jaimini a 3th century A.D. scholar. According to the epic the religion followed by the kingdom was Brahmanism.

In different accounts of Manipur including Poiraiton Khunthok, one Moriya chief named Phamballaeha (Moriya Phambal Raja) is found to have been mentioned. Moriya Phamballaeha is known in Manipur history for his reformation of the then existing calendar. He introduced a uniform solar calendar. The date of Moriya Phamballaeha is not known with any degree of certainty, however it is believed to be of about 1100 A.D. after the exodus of Austro-Asiatic people. Moriya Phamballaeha is believed to be the chief of Moriya who shifted his capital towards the north-west of Moriya and finally somewhere to Ithai on the southern part of Imphal valley. Later accounts reveal that the Moriya chief of Ithai had full control of Moriya i.e. the entire Chindwin valley. Principal cities were kept under the charge of officers known as *Lakpas* like *Tumu Lakpa* meaning administrative 'officer-in-charge' of Tumu, and so on.

It is also not known who succeeded Moriya Phambal Raja, however the Moriya chief who ruled at about the period of 1250-60 A.D. is found to have one Oinuseng-ba-ra-cha (Oinu Seng Raja) according to Ningthourol Lambuba. The tribe to which these Sakiyan princes ruled was called Kege. The Keges were possibly a Chin origin but mixed with other tribes. It is during the period of Oinu Seng Raja the Bangal principality at Lamangdong grew to a political power and possibly posed a threat to the Keges. Hence the Keges invaded the Bangal principality of Lamangdong and destroyed it. After their victory over the Bangal principality they invaded the Poirais. There was a serious clash in which 768 Keges were beheaded by Thongak Lakpicha the Poirai general according to Ningthourol Lambuba, and further said that Oinu Seng Raja was caught alive by the Poirai king Khongtekcha. Oinu Seng Raja was probably vanquished. Thus the power of the Moriya princes was reduced.

It seems after the war with the Poireis no Moriya prince succeeded Oinu Seng Raja. On the side of the Poireis it is not known the number of casualties. The chroniclers usually do not record their defeat or disgrace. There is no logic where a fighting between two forces of equal weapon and war strategy, and with proportionately equal strength there will be no casualty on one side. The Poireis too must have lost her valuable men. It is likely Khongtekcha too might have been killed in the action as evident from the interregnum of 11 years following the death of Khongtekcha as recorded in the Chaitharol Kumbaba. Of course we cannot manufacture history.

Thus the war between the Kegees and Poireis had brought a great harm to both of them. It was perhaps a catastrophe in this hill surrounded valley. As a result the Kegees invited the tribe who would become Moirangs, who were by that time on the hill now known as Thangjing hills. The Kegees then amalgamated with the new arrival from about 1270 A.D. The ruling chief of the amalgamated tribe went to the hand of Lai chief.

The culture and civilization of the Kege principality was the living culture and civilization of the ancient kingdom of Manipur. They have preserved art and literature along with astronomy and astrology. More details have been discussed in the sections on Moirang principality, Khamba-Thoiba etc.

Before the arrival of the Moirangs the Kege principality was also known by the name Kege-Ngangoi. The Ngangois arrived on this valley in the closing part of the 8th century A.D. and first settled on the northern part of the valley and from where they gradually moved southwards along the eastern side of the valley and finally arrived in the Kege principality. They present Ngangkha-rawai was perhaps their principal settlement. The occupied the area at the time of the arrival of the Moirangs as the name Ngangkha was in existence when Thangjing Koirel the chief of Lai as recorded in Moirang Ningthourol Lambuba, came down to the valley along with his Muhui subjects first at Ngangkha. The culture and dialect of the Ngangois are clearly visible in the

**Kege-Moirang literature.** Even the appellation *Moi-rāng* is a mixed Ngangoi word with their suffix *-rāng* as in *hei-rāng*, *pi-rāng*, *lei-rāng* etc. It is seen that the inhabitants of Kege principality before the arrival of Maluis were Moriya, Nga (Anga), and Kege. As discussed earlier the Moriyas too were Angas and hence ethnically the inhabitants were Angas and Chinese.

We have lost the history of the Bangal principality at Lamang-dong too. We however construct the lost history by hypothesis from the following available materials.

**Bengal accounts :** We are told by the Bengal accounts that the whorabouts of the Sena princes namely Surya Sena and Purusottoma Sena, probably, sons of Viswarupa Sena are not known from about 1219 A.D. In 1225 A.D. Kesava Sena the younger brother of Viswarupa Sena was found on the throne of Vikrampura. Between the death of Viswarupa Sena and succession of Kesava Sena, it appears, there is an interregnum of 5 years. The cause of the interregnum is not given in the Bengal account.

Normally father is succeeded by the sons but in the case of Viswarupa Sena he is found to have been succeeded by his younger brother. So we are to presume either Surya Sena and Purusottoma Sena were not the sons of Viswarupa Sena, or there was a quarrel over the succession, and so on. If there was a feud over the succession, it is likely that the victorious one expelled the defeated group. Thus it is more likely that Kesava Sena expelled either Surya Sena or Purusottoma Sena or both. Hence either Surya Sena or Purusottoma Sena or both left Vikrampura situated to the south of Dacca and proceeded towards the east.

The Pattikera principality near Comila decayed soon after 1220 A.D. Pattikera was the capital city of the country called Kala. The inhabitants of Kala were known by the name Kala-cha or Kala-chaiya who were later called Vishnupriyas. The principality was perhaps destroyed by the growth of a dynasty called Deva dynasty near Noakhali. Most of the inhabitants of this country moved towards Mantara (Burma) and settled

somewhere to the east of Lunglea (Lungleh) in Mizoram where some Mayangs settled

**Manipur accounts** There are records of the presence of Bangals and proto-Bangals in the territory of the kingdom of Manipur in the first half of the 13th century A D

(1) In Moirang Ningthourol Lambuba it is mentioned that Thangjung Korrel Lai the chief of Moirang while they were inhabiting in the hills now known as the Thangjung hills, visited the plains where the aristocratic Bangals settled by riding on a horse. The period of his visit is estimated to be in the 1250s. In the language of the text it is stated as, '*Mayang sakan tongba, Pungal tampak loba, Iyn Mai u nungthou, Makur huthokpa, Pungal tharok me ortong le-jru*', meaning 'horse-back riding Bangal-plain-visited, Bangal palanquin-riding land'.

(2) We have discussed about the attendants of princess Chingurembi in the section on Chingurembi. In that literary account Chingurembi Khonglup, 10 names of attendants of Chingurembi are given. Out of the ten names eight belonged to Bangal and proto-Bangal. Of the eight names Lokhon 'as (Das) is a very typical Bangal name. The account mentions that Chingurembi was a Mayang princess. The Mayang belonged to a group of Mongoloid tribes but they had associations with the Bangals and proto-Bangal. This is the reason why the name Mayang had been transferred to Bangals and proto-Bangals at a later period. More details may be seen in the sections on Mayang and Chingurembi. Chingurembi was a Bangal princess and the name was a titular name given by the Mayangs. Her original name is not known. The period of Chingurembi is estimated to be about 1225-30 A D.

(3) In Ningthourol Lambuba it is stated that Nongyai Thingkonhanba a Khuman chieftain set forth an expedition towards the south. In that expedition he came across a Bangal village named Mara somewhere near present Hengtam village in the extreme south of present Manipur. The Bangal chieftain of that village was called Kala Raja. Nongyai Thingkonhanba subdued

Kala Raja and brought his son Maratal Atal as captive along with other proto-Bangals. The period of Nongyai Thingkenhanba is estimated to be about 1290 A.D. from the ground that he was the father-in-law of the Poirei king Irengba (c 1296-1310 A.D.). Most of these Bangal inhabitants of Mara village are believed to be proto-Bangals who were later known as Vishnupriya Manipuris.

(4) While Loitongba was on the throne of Poirei, he got information of playing tops by the Bangals of a Bangal village situated on the western side of the valley. Loitongba sent some of his men to collect some tops from that village. Accordingly some tops were brought and the people of Poirei learnt art of playing tops. They further developed a new type of game with tops. The period of Loitongba in the tentative date chart is c 1316-29 A.D.

As stated in earlier sections, it may be mentioned here that there was a village named Naran Seina in the western part of the valley. The history of naming the village is not available. Naran Seina could have derived from Narayan Sena. There is no impossibility of it and more over people living in this village and its surrounding areas have strong Bangal and proto-Bangal elements distinctly visible to this date. There is every possibility of the village mentioned in the text in connection with the playing of tops was Naran Seina.

We proceed to construct the lost link as follows : Lakshmana Sena after fleeing from Nadia at about 1202 A.D. settled some where to the south of Dacca at a place which they gave the name Vikrampura and continued to rule there for sometime. He is believed to have died at about 1206 A.D. He was succeeded by his son Viswarupa Sena who ruled for another 14 years. When Viswarupa Sena died in the year 1219 A.D. there was possibly a quarrel over the succession of throne between his sons and his brother. The sons could not defeat their uncle left their kingdom Vikrampura. They moved towards an easterly direction to the south of Tippara. From there they moved towards Chittagong

somewhere near Rangamati and then to low hill ranges of northern Arakan possibly with an intention to move to Brahma Desh (Burma), specially because of the rising power of another kingdom to the east Vikramapura under the Deva dynasty. Vikramapura was later occupied by the Deva dynasty. At about the period under consideration the Pattikera kingdom was on the decline and the Deva dynasty became more and more powerful. Prior to this period waves after waves of Tibeto-Burmans and other tribes started migrating from different parts of northern Burma and south-western Yun-nan towards eastern India. The Sena princes possibly collected informations of the route from these tribes.

After reaching a bifurcated point which was located in the south-eastern part of present Mizoram, they possibly changed their direction towards the north and found a settlement of Mayangs a Tibeto-Burman tribe. There is no impossibility that some earlier proto-Bangals were also in that settlement. These Mayangs migrated from present northern Burma, which by that period a separate zone of principedom. If proto-Bangals are to be present at all they were from Pattikera kingdom. In that settlement the Sena princes and their horde lived together with the earlier inhabitants. It is likely that the Bangals gave the name of the new settlement Basa meaning shelter in their dialect. When the two racial groups lived together for sometime a horde of invaders led by Samlungfa the Pong prince after the conquest of northern Arakan appeared at Basa from the southern side. Samlungfa being a noble conqueror did not commit any atrocity on the Basis i.e. the people of Basa. It seems the Basis had no fighting capability and they were living with their families. Samlungfa left them and moved towards the northern mediaeval highways. The period of Samlungfa's presence in Basa is estimated to be about 1220 A.D or a little later.

The Bangals, proto-Bangals and Tibeto-Burman Mayangs continued to live together at Basa for some more time after the departure of Samlungfa. While doing so the two racial groups got gradually mixed. The mixed group who continued to speak the Tibeto-



Burman dialect became exclusively known as Pasi (Basi) at a later period. In another expedition, Nongyai Thingkonhanba came across a village inhabited by the Pasis. Ningthourol Lambuba mentions that he subdued the village of Basis. After subduing the village, while leaving for home he forgot his bunch of feather of Langmei used as a decoration of his turban on the outskirts of the village. On seeing the bunch of feather left, Mayee Thumbi the daughter of Leitang the chief of Pasi village called Nongyai Thingkonhanba to come back and collect his bunch of feather of Langmei. Nongyai Thingkonhanba came back and requested the girl to pin the bunch of feather by her own hand on his turban. The girl did it, and since then the place became known as *Langmeithet*. This village of Pasis is a new settlement of Pasis after their fleeing from Lamangdong as a result of the Kege-invasion.

It appears these Tibeto-Burmans and proto-Bangals accepted the Sena prince to be their king. These Mayangs belonged to the Hao tribe commonly called by the Poireis. They possibly belonged to a clan of Mangang Hao tribe. The-Hao tribe started migrating to the hill ranges of present Manipur from about 11th century A D. At the time of the coming of Bangals there were one or two small settlements of these Hao tribes mainly on the northern side.

After sometime all the inhabitants of Basa started moving towards the valley of Imphal along the route of Samlungfa. The route from Basa to Imphal valley was on low hills of penplain type with easily passable tracts. The Manipuri account Ningthourol Lambuba describes the topography of that region as, "..... *Areng lengkai ching nongchup tuwangla tuwanglai, tampak phaira phainungshi.....*", meaning literally 'neither hill nor plain'. Since then the existence of Basa was no more. All records so far available including the Rajmala of Tripura refer to Basa as legends. All such accounts mention the existence of Basa at one time. The image of Basa had strong impact on the population at a later period. Some accounts of Manipur indicate the presence of scholars at Basa. After reaching the political boundary of present Manipur,

the hill range on which the Basis came gradually increased in height till it reached its highest point at Koubru. This hill range is a watershed of rivers flowing to Burma and Surma valley. The hill range is now known as Loi-hi Ching or Loi-jing.

All the Basis headed by the Sena prince entered along the Loi-jing range and came down to the valley of Imphal somewhere near Lamangdong, about 24 km from Imphal and settled there. After sometime it grew to a political power and a principality was carved out. In that principality the Bangals, proto-Pangals and Mayangs who were called Basis lived together peacefully. In course of time small batches of Tibeto-Burman tribes came and settled in that principality. It is probable that the Bangal presumed possibly from their earlier concept of the kingdom of Manipur of Jaimini in his *Aswamedha Parva* of the *Mahabharata* epic, the Imphal plateau to be Manipur and called the valley Manipur. This principality continued to flourish till it was destroyed by the Koges at about 1260 A.D.

There was a small settlement to the north of the Lamangdong principality. It was inhabited by a tribe called Loi. The Chakpas belonged to some associate tribe of the Loi. It has already been discussed that Loi is another name of Tai, which some of the Tai tribes used to call themselves. The Chakpas were probably Buddhists. They migrated to the ancient kingdom of Manipur at about 1000 A.D. It appears the Bangal principality of Lamangdong had good relations with the Lois as evident from the name of two attendants of Chingurembi namely Angkhul Tao and Kathou as stated in the section on Chingurembi. The Chakpas were living in complete isolation from the Poireis mainly from their differences in the way of life and religious belief. Any small settlement by that period continued to live quite independently but occasionally the people of Poirei attacked them.

The land Poireis at about 1250 A.D. was constituted by three principalities namely Luwang, Mangang and Khuman. Although Luwang was the first principality of Poirei it had lost practically the

political power by this period. However the Luwang principality continued to be the centre for learning. Prince Naothingkhong of the Leinungs which became later known as the Mangangs was educated in the Luwangs in the beginning of the 13th century A.D. When the neo-Tibetans founded their first kingdom on this land there was only one unit. As they grew bigger they separated into three families namely Luwang, Leinung and Khuman. The Khumans from about the middle of 13th century A.D. moved southwards to the north of Patsoi and started absorbing new immigrants and gained more power. Even then the three principalities lived together peacefully. On the other hand the Leinungs who got mixed with the Mangang Haos became hunger for power. They attacked several other smaller tribes and made their strength felt by others. They had subjugated the Shelloy-Langmais by about 1250 A.D.

The people of the Bangal principality, particularly the Bangals and proto-Bangals took the people of the above three principalities as one Mongoloid tribe similar to those the Tai. The people of these three principalities called themselves Poireis but the Bangals and proto-Bangals called them Moi-tai as discussed in the section the origin of the name Meitei

The Bangals gave their princess Chingurembi in marriage to Naothingkhong the Moi-tai prince and thus they had matrimonial alliances with the Poireis. Prior to the contact with the Bangals the Moi-tais were streamlined in manner, habit, dress and diet by Samlungfa the Pong prince. With the contact of Bangals a new thought towards spiritualism appears to have been infused on the Moi-tais. We have evidence of Khongtekcha performing the rituals of Devi from the copper plate inscriptions discovered in the early half of the 20th century A D. Khongtekcha was the son of Naothingkhong, but his mother is not known as Naothingkhong had several wives. There is no impossibility that his mother was Chingurembi and that he probably inherited the worship of Devi from his parents. No record of Chingurembi is found in the royal chronicle. All such records on genealogy describing non-Mongoloid origin had possibly been destroyed during the period of Pamhelba

on the instigation of Shantidas Gosai a religious preacher from eastern Bengal who introduced Ramandi Dharma a Hindu sect in Manipur. Not only Chingurembi but all records dealing with Bangals had been destroyed. So we have lost practically all records covering this area. Shantidas was probably an opponent of Saivism. As such all scriptures relating to Saivism are also believed to have been destroyed.

There is every reason to believe that there were some learned Bangal scholars among the courtiers of Naothingkhong. The Poireis did not develop any script to write with nor they brought any script from outside. It is most likely that these Bangal scholars brought a script which was a modification of Devanagari script. Thus the Sena culture was felt on the Poireis. However the Poireis are supposed to have a pre-Buddhist culture with them.

Social intercourse between Bangals and Poireis continued for more than three decades. The Bangals were looked upon by some section of Moi-tais with an eye-sore. The Moi-tais were free, frank, easy going and quick tempered, but the Bangals on the other hand shrewd, cunning, and less quick-tempered. There must have been jealousy of Chingurembi among other co-wives, rivalry among the half-brothers born by different queens. All anger and indignation were transferred on to Mayangs who were the backbone of the Bangals. Khongtekcha ascended the throne quite young. The Vishnu temple of Lamangdong is believed by some scholars to have been built during the period of Khongtekcha by the proto-Bangals who were worshippers of Vishnu, and since then Lamangdong became known as Vishnupur. This view is doubtful. The delapidated Vishnu temple of Lamangdong was possibly built in the second half of the 15th century A.D. during the reign of Kiyamba.

The earlier relation between the Kege principality and the Bangal principality is not traceable. It is lost in obscurity. But the destruction of the Bangal principality by the Keges is almost certain. The Keges invaded the Bangal principality at about 1260 A.D. When the Bangal principality was destroyed all its inhabitants fled to the Loijing ranges. The Pasis (Basis) who

were racially an admixture of Bangals, proto-Bangals and Tibeto-Burman Mayangs fled towards the south along the route through which they came nearly half a century back. The clean Mayangs fled towards Laimaton of the Loijing ranges. From there they possibly fled towards the south western side and settled son ewhere between present Manipur and Tripura. Those proto-Bangals and Pasis who did not move far away are found establishing villages along the mediaeval highways on the southern side of present Manipur. Two such villages one of proto-Bangals and other of Pasis were discovered by Nongyai Thingkonhanba the Khuman chieftain at about 1290-1310 A.D. There could have been some more villages of these fugitive tribes but no record is available. This is confirmed from the records that after half a century of the catastrophe Bangal villages on the western part of Imphal valley were found to have flourished. One such village inhabited by Bangals is mentioned in connection with playing of tops during the reign of Loitongba (c 1316-29 A.D.). Some of the Bangals and proto-Bangals fled as far as Rangamati near Chittagong. It is these Bangals who spread the news of the defeat of the Sena prince in the hand of Kika (Kika-ta) or Keke that reached upto Nadia in Bengal, and this reflected in the Ballala Charita of Anandabhatta compiled in the year 1510 A.D. In course of time these Bangals and proto-Bangals fused into one unit under the name Vishnupriya Manipuri. Those Bangals and proto-Bangals who continued to settle in Imphal valley became a constituent part of the Meiteis. Meiteis of Mongoloid origin and Meiteis of Indo-Aryan origin became inconspicuous in matters of language, custom, habit and way of life and religion except the ethnic characteristics. However this too is mixed to a great extent. The Vishnupriya Manipuris who settled elsewhere continued to speak their dialects which they called Vishnupriya language. On the other hand the Meitei language is now called Manipuri language. The presence of Bangal and proto-Bangal elements among the Meiteis is of the order of about 15 per cent.

There was another principality of the Lai, Senpi and Austrio tribes in the area covered by the Nambul river on the east, the

east of the settlement of Loi near the foothills of the Loijing ranges on the west, the south of Patsoi on the north, and the north of Lamangdong on the south. This principality came into existence from about the latter part of second half of the 13th century A.D. How this principality came to an end is not clearly known but it appears they amalgamated with the Kege-Moirang particularly with the Ngangoi of the Kege-Moirang. Characters like Konthou, Khoripha, Miyokpha etc who became demi-gods from the practice of the ancestor worship of the tribe are still remembered and found in the myths like the legends of Konthoujam Lai-rembi, Lai-Ningthou Khoriphaba, Miyokpha etc. The shrines of these characters are found near Konthoujam village, near Nambol and on the right bank of the Nambol river in Imphal respectively. The legends of Miyokpha seems to have been lost and is by now represented by a big tree grown on the spot of the shrine of Miyokpha. Now the tree itself became known as the *Miyokpha* tree. It is probably from this species of tree which is rare in the valley is known as the Miyokpha tree. The names Nambol, Nambol and Oinam (Oi-nam) are words of Tai origin where *Nam* means water. These group of Senbi had an account of their ruling chiefs which became mingled up with the ruling chiefs of Kege-Moirang and Ngangoi

On the northern limits of their territory we also find place names like Kham-nam Loirak, Kham-nam Bazar, Māklang, Khun-pong etc. The word Kham-nam in the Senbi dialect means 'gold-water', it could have also been a mixed word of Khamba and Senbi meaning 'water of Khamba', since we find a character named Khamlangba who belonged to a Sāchung tribe. The ethnic origin of Sāchung as discussed in earlier section, belonged to a mixed stock of Tibetan Khamba tribe and tribes of Tai origin like Kham-yāng who possessed both the traits of Khamba and Tai. The date of Khamlangba has also been estimated to about the second half of the 14th century A.D. and he also married the daughter of Songlen Lānthaba the king of Kege-Moirang, named Shamphabi alias Kāikā, who became demi-gods from the ancestor worship of the

Tai, and whose shrines are now found on the northern parts of this principality.

Besides the above mentioned characters we also find from the fabulous manuscripts characters like Kuptreng, Sentreng, Kojintuthokpa, Leishanglen, Leitanglen Tāngshāngba, Konsouren, Konphu Laiphu, Leikak Leiyāren etc. who are linked up with the ancestor of Pākhangba of the Sanāmahi-Pākhangba legend and partly linking Nongta the ancestor of Mangang ruling clan who in turn projected to be the Pākhangba of the above mentioned legend, belonged to the people of this principality. Names like Santreng, Kuptreng, and Kojintuthokpa probably belonged to the Austro speakers who settled in the area of Khā-jui and Awāng-jui. Leishanglen and Leitanglen Tāngshāngba seem to have belonged to the people of Sāchung, and Konsouren and Konphu Laiphu probably belonged to Haorok Konthou, Chinfu and Tafu tribes. Even if the above hypothesis is not correct, it is certain that they were the names of a mixed tribe of Sāchung, Senbi and some other tribes of Tai origins.

This principality seems to have no central authority but more or less existed in the form of confederation of petty chiefs who were independent either of Poirei or of the Kege-Moirang before it disintegrated and merged with the above principalities. Those who settled upto Nambol area from their southern limit probably got merged the Kege-Moirang principality which is perhaps the reason why the Kege-Moirang king Khelei Nungnang Telheiba demanded the areas lying upto Nambol to be included in the territory of the Kege-Moirang principality to his nephew king Bhagyashandra of the Poirei which ultimately brought a rupture between the maternal uncle and nephew.

The accounts of such principalities often describe in exaggeration that one time the whole Poirei i.e. Imphal valley was ruled by them. As there is a continuous rulers of Poirei from Pākhangba upto this date many local pandits who cannot accommodate such accounts into the mainstream of history interpret such principalities existed before Pākhangba. Hence they say Mangba a classic

Tibeto-Burman, Khoripha(ba) a Tai tribe, Moriya Phamballacha a Moriya tribe etc. lived before Pakhangba. It may be noted that Kangba tribe began to settle on the upper Iril valley by the closing part of the 8th century A.D., the Moriya tribes began to infiltrate from about the closing part of 11th century A.D. to the southern part of Imphal valley by gradually moving from present Kabow valley and the Lai tribes began to settle in the valley from about the second half of the 13th century A.D.

It is difficult to reconstruct a comprehensive history of this principality at the moment due to want of materials. At the most it may be said that during its expansion in the second half of the 13th century A.D. they subdued the Chengleis and defeated the Khumans who by that period on the northern limit of this principality at Patsoi and its north. As a result of the pressure of the Tai the Khumans moved towards the east of the Loktak lake near present Mayang-Imphal area where they amalgamated with the Nongyais and became known as Khuman-Nongyai.

After uprooting the Khumans and Chengleis the Lais pushed further north where they had contact with the rest of Poireis, but they did not confront with them. On the other hand they became subjects of the Poirei kings as recorded in Cheitharol Kumbaba. It is recorded in the said chronicle that during the reign of Loiyumba (c 1310-16 A.D) the Lai and Poirei attended in turn the military office attached to the royal court in an equivocal way. In the discharge of duties the Poireis superseded the Lais and gradually the Lais disappeared. The Lais then moved towards the south became the subjects of the Kege-Moirang.

The half fabulous account of Henjunaha (Hen-su-naha) of the Manipuri folklore clearly depicts the pressure and activities of the Lais. The period of Henjunaha is estimated to be about the 14th century A.D. at the earliest and he seems to be a Kege origin. He fell in love with a girl named Lai-rourembi who probably belonged to a Mayang or cognate tribe of Mayang, that is, a mixed stock of Bodo and Lai as the name suggests. The Lais



frequently attacked people of other ethnic origins. Henjunaha became a very prominent youth and the Lai wanted to banquish him. They also probably did not like the girls of their origin to be married to him. So they ambushed him one night which was fallen to be the first Saturday of the month of Lamda while Henjunaha returned after meeting Lairourembi. The Lais chased him and beaten to death. The Lais described the action was the wrath of the devils for his trespass while the latter were holding a conference, concealing themselves. The superstitious people believed it and since then every year on the first Saturday of the month of Lamda people used to offer uncooked food to the devils for their protection. The devils were called in their mixed dialect *Saroi*. People were very much afraid of moving out in the evening on the first Saturday of the month of Lamda lest they should meet the *Sarois* and consequently they would meet the fate of Henjunaha. This event spread to the whole of the country and the fear is still lingering to this date and the practice of offering uncooked food to the devils which is known as *Saroi khāngba* is still continuing on *Lamta thangja*, that is, Saturday of Lamda.

The half fabulous story of Sanarembi (also written as Samdrembi) and Chais-ra is of the principality of the Lai in western part of the valley. In the story it is said that a noble named Khulen Ngamba, a mystified chief the father of Sentreng and Kuptreng, had two wives. The first wife is named Sang-khu-rembi a virtuous lady who bore him a daughter named Sanarembi and the second wife named Yaibi Leima a jealous lady bore him another daughter named Chaisa-ra. The names Sentreng and Kuptreng strongly suggest them to be of Austric origin who were the sons of a chief who settled in or near Nambol area at Kha-jiri. The word *jiri* is an Austric formation. The names of the mothers and their respective daughters indicate the two different ethnic origins. Sang-khu-rembi and her daughter Sana-rembi indicate the names usually adopted by the Mayang or any other Bodo-Tai stock influenced by the Moriyas whereas Yaibi Leima and Chaisa-ra are the names usually adopted by the neo-Tibetans or their mixed

stock. In some manuscripts the name of Kuptreng is found to have been written as Kuptreng Manika. The word Manika indicates the intake of the Bodos who became Tripuris. There is evidence of the mixing of the Bodos and the Austric people in western Manipur. In Jiribam sub-division we find a place name like Di-buong where *di* is a Bodo word and *buong* is an Austric word. The Tripuri rulers of Bodo origin assumed the title or name Manika from Ratna Manika who ruled probably in the second half of the 16th century A. D. possibly from the Indo-Aryan influences. So the name Kuptreng Manika cannot be expected earlier than the second half of the 16th century A. D. if the name was not posthumously given. Since these tribes were later absorbed or amalgamated with other tribes there is less chance of conferring the name posthumously to Kuptreng. It is more probable that they were people of early Khagemba period when the wave of Sanāmahī cult was in its peak as seen from different fabulous writings that Kuptreng Manika is projected to be the father of Pākhangba of the Sanāmahī-Pākhangba legend when the Poireis began to project Nongta the founder of the then ruling dynasty to be the Pākhangba of the said legend. We have only a glean account of this Lai, Austric and Mayang configuration principality in the Nambol-Konthoujam area. Many characters like Kojin Tuthokpa etc. belonged to the people of this principality and their chronigraphers projected them to have lived long before Nongta. The account of this political unit should have started from the second half of the 13th century A. D. It seems this political unit was first founded by one Lawang named Tinggoi Ngamba who married a girl named Laireima of Moiram (Moirang). It may be noted that the name Moirang came into existence later which is a mixed word of Marem and Ngangoi. The earlier name is Kege-Ngangoi which was called by the Marems Moiram. But the political unit founded by Tinggoi Ngamba did not last long as there was none to succeed him. Manuscripts and traditions describe in a fabulous way that Tinggoi Ngamba had several sons all of whom became gods in different directions.

## THE MEITEILON OR MANIPURI LANGUAGE

It has been discussed in the section on Migration in general about the tribes in the formation of Tibeto-Burmans. They were tribes of Tibetan and Himalayan origin ; Asiatic origin like Karen, Kachin, King, Kāng, Kou Man Mon etc. ; Chinese like Chin, Ch'u etc. ; and Tai origin like Shen Lao, Ngai Lao, Lai etc. besides other elements of Huns and Tartars which came comparatively later. When these tribes got mixed a series of dialects known as Tibeto-Burman of the so-called Sino-Tibetan family of language gave birth. The Tibeto-Burman language began to develop from about the early Christian era and became fully characterised from about the 7th century A D

Early Poireis were a group of people belonging to a bulk of neo-Tibetans. However the founder of Poirei belonged to another Himalayan tribe called Chakkha who were the ruling clan of the Sakya kingdom of Tagaung in the Upper Irrawaddy valley founded by Abhi Raja the Sakiyan king in the 2nd century B.C. and subsequently renovated by another Sakiyan king named Dhaja Raja from the Middle country in the 3rd century A D. Poireiton is believed to be a descendant of Abhi Raja or of Dhaja Raja. The dialect of these Sakiyan tribes became mixed with the Tai particularly with Tho and Do Racially too they became mixed. At a later period specially from about the 15th century A.D. Burmese historians call them Shan-Bamans. The Shan-Bamans of the 8th century A. D. is obviously less mixed with the Tai. As they were the ruling chiefs of northern Burma the home of Tibeto-Burmans it is likely that they had more contact or association with other Tibeto-Burmans who may also be called neo-Tibetans like Khunung, Khumans etc. So the dialect of the Sakiyan rulers of northern Burma got mixed with other neo-Tibetan dialects. The subjects as stated above spoke basically Tibeto-Burman dialects mixed with the Sakiyan and Tai dialects. Thus the dialect of the

early Poireis was basically a mixed dialect. The Sakiyan dialect seems to contain much Pali words or words that became Pali. The Pali or old Sanskrit word found in old Manipuri language were mainly from the Sakiyan dialect. The nucleus of Meiteilon or modern Manipuri is therefore the dialect of the Poireis

The date of birth of Meiteilon or Manipuri is estimated to be about 800-850 A.D. Prior to this date it was the dialect of some ancient tribes. It appears from Manipuri accounts that the mixed dialect of Chakha (Sakya), Khu (Khu-nu), Lei (Lei-nu) Nga (Nga-nu), and Nung (Nung-ba) is the basic foundation of Meiteilon or Manipuri language as evident from the literary accounts that they frequently mention the dialects of other tribes as if deviated forms from that of the speech of this group, which they took as the foundation. Even though these groups of people migrated along with the Man of Khu-Man (Khuman), they took the dialect of Man as a deviated form and described, "*Mapām Thāngnga-na tenghānaba, matu Kampong na mikouna numit-pu Tumit-O, thoklababud, pātīlaba-O kouye*", where Thāngnga and Kampong belonged to Man clans. In a similar way for different tribes like Marem, Mahui (Moirang), Nongyai, Khamba, Heirem-Khunjal, Senbi-Kabow, Shelloy-Langmai etc. the dialects are found to have been mentioned occasionally. It also appears the dialect of Nung is similar to that of Lai and Tho or it may be the result of their association when they moved to places now in northern Burma and south eastern Tibet, being the dialect of Tai origin. Hence we do not find the dialect of Lai or of Tho mentioned in any literary accounts of Manipur. The accounts available with us so far about the dialect of Kham(-pa or -ba) are those when they got merged with the Man and Nongyai in the Khuman setup. When they settled on this land their dialect continued to develop from within. By about 950 A.D. some words belonging to Shelloy-Langmai and Chenglei began to mix. It further expanded its mixing with the dialects of Leihou, Mahou, who spoke a neo-Tibetan mixed with Bodo elements or sub-Himalayan dialects, Kharoi, Ngāngoi, Hangoi etc. who spoke Tibeto-Burman of neo-Burmese origin,

Heirem Khunjāl etc. who spoke a Tai dialect etc. By about the same time it also felt the impact of the dialects of the tribes like Haokap, Chingsāng, Khunpham, Ngāngcheng etc. who spoke Tibeto-Burman of neo-Burmese origin. Along with the incoming of more dialects, the Manipuri language continued to grow upto about 1200 A.D. In short the period from 800 A.D. to 1200 A.D. is the first phase of Meiteilon.

Since then new stocks of Tibeto-Burman dialects spoken by the tribes like Mangang, Mayang-Thongnang etc. came in. Not much later than the Mangangs, an altogether different stock of language of the Indo-Aryan family also came in, more precisely at about 1225 A.D. along with Tibeto-Burman Mayang. Those Indo-Aryan dialects were the dialects of Bangals and proto-Bangals. The presence of the new stock of the language i.e. the Indo-Aryan language on the first phase Meiteilon lasted upto about 1260 A.D. Some of the words of Indo-Aryan origin like *tāda*, *māma*, *khurā* etc. which became inconspicuous as found in Meiteilon of to-day were the products of this period, unlike words of Sanskrit that came in later period. From about 1300 A.D., the language i.e. Meiteilon received another impact of other Tibeto-Burman dialects of Mahui (Moirang) along with the dialects of Kege. On the other hand in the Kege principality the nucleus of the language is the dialect of Moriya which is a cognate language of Poirai got mixed with other dialects. The dialect of Moirang though belonged to a Tibeto-Burman it contained several words of Lai a Tai origin. The dialect of the Kege belonged to a mixed dialect of Chin, Tai and Lai. The dialects of Funan and Maring are believed to have its impact from about this period though both of them arrived on this land in the latter half of the 11th century A.D. Thus at about 1400 A.D. Meiteilon had assumed a new dimension. This period, that is, from 1200 A.D. to 1400 A.D. may be taken as the second phase of Meiteilon.

The new language continued to grow with the absorption of some of the words or the dialect of Senbi-Kabow upto about 1600 A.D. with an independent development. The dialect of Senbi-Kabow belonged to a mixed dialect of Tai and Asiatic tribes.

The period from 1400 A.D. to 1600 A.D. may be regarded as the third phase of Meiteilon.

From 1600 A.D. the modern Meiteilon emerged. However the language of the 17th century A.D. as seen to-day contains much obsolete words.

There is no concrete record to see what the spoken language of the Poireis was. The written accounts so far available to us were all the 17th century A.D. writings and hence the language in them was the language of that period with few words of the early period. It is very likely that the early dialect of Poireis was gradually changed by the presence of other Tibeto-Burmans. It may be noted that the dialect of the Tai or its associate tribe Chakpa who arrived on this land as early as the 12th century A.D. had practically no impact on Meiteilon. Similarly the Indo-Aryan dialects which came a little later than 1600 A.D. had practically no impact on the language. The Austric people who were present in the western Imphal valley from about the 14th century A.D. had very little impact on the Manipuri language.

Now we shall investigate the language in details. We pick up some words of Tibeto-Burmans and other dialects that constituted Meiteilon so far available from literary accounts, particularly Ningthourol Lambuba along with some words of Chakpa which practically had little or no effect.

(1) Shelloy-Langmai		(2) Senbi-Kabow	
1. Rain	kumbā	1. Hen	kei
2. Lake	theba	2. Pillow	yēng
3. Road	mungbi	3. Water	nam
4. Bridge	tingbi	4. Fruit	maak
5. Head	koke	5. Gold	kham
6. Straight	ateba	6. Grave	pai
7. Rice	yai	7. Plantain leaf	ton
8. Death	stotpa	8. Bridge	tikhu
9. Fishing net	waikon	9. Strong	tikon
10. To push	ushā-o	10. War	shpek

## (3) Moirāng (Ma-hni)

1. Water	loklou
2. Axe	hāibi
3. Land (dry)	kongki
4. Prown fish	keikong
5. Ngakha (a small variety of fish)	ngātoi
6. Shoulder	nāo
7. Thigh	sēng
8. Sharpness	akhāba
9. Peasant	thānga
10. Bitter taste	chamba

## (4) Khuman-Nongyai

1. Lake	kon
2. Lake shore	yāh
3. Weeds	tāirāng (a Thoubal origin)
4. Cane	sāngdon (a Khamba origin)
5. Lotus leaf	lāurā (a Thoubal origin)

## (5) Khāram

1. Goat	khen
2. Salt	machi

## (6) Thāngnga-Kampong

1. Stone	khei
2. Sun	tumit
3. Priestess	moibi
4. Dressed cotton	moireng
5. To rise	pātlah

## (7) Heirem-Khunjan

1. Lotus plant	tham
2. Water	tam
3. Big water	tamlan
4. Air	hoomlen

## (8) Marem

1. Sun	moi
2. Plain	phāi
3. Land	ram

## (9) Loi (Chapka and others)

	(a) Andro	(b) Sekmai	(c) Chairen
1. Smoke	wālkhoo	wālhoo	phoolkhoo
2. Lightning	sāgun kisio	choogoone	nongthāng
3. Wood	phol	karak	phool
4. Man	teeksā horā	teekhorā	pāsul
5. Boy	teeksā horāsā	sājee hora	pāsulsā
6. Girl	teeksā yāhusā	sājee yāhoo	thā loisā
7. Younger brother	nāsee	nāsee	nanao
8. Son	saijā horā	sāhora	nasā
9. Daughter	saijā yāhoo	sāyā hoo	nasā nupi
10. Cat	hoonggen	hooljik	houdong

In Meiteilon it is possible to detect two distinct types of words, one is long sounded while the other is short sounded and less musical. We pick up a sampling of such words for our examination.

(A) The following are some of the long sounded words both current and obsolete with English equivalents given in bracket.

1. heirāng (fruit)	2. lānggoi (horse/elephant)
leirāng (flower)	linggoi (womb)
pirāng (tear)	kōnggoi (knot)
tairāng (weeds)	chīnggoi (talk)
loirang (banyan tree)	khōnggōi (insult)
3. wānglen (hour)	4. chōinou (gold)
khomlen (sleep)	tetnou (iron)
lamlen (land)	shānou (boy/friend)
tamlen (big water)	khōinou (girl/ friend)
hoomlen (air)	ishānou (younger brother)



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|--|--|
| 5. palem (mother)<br>maalem (earth)<br>irem (my faithful)<br>dairem (my faithful friend)<br>madairem (his faithful friend) | 6. lemlei (fish)<br>wānglei (wine)<br>haorei (direction)<br>yānglei (dog)<br>chaklei (cow)                           |
| 7. loimom (paddy)<br>khoimom (goddess)<br>chakmom (fire)<br>mamom (his daughter)<br>imom (my daughter)                     | 8. lāngdon (weeds)<br>sāngdon (cane)<br>shīngdon (top of tree)<br>nongdon (sky)<br>chudon (bud or top of sugar cane) |
| 9. nganu (duck)<br>khunu (pigeon)<br>manu (girl)<br>momnu (girl/women)<br>chanu (daughter/girl)                            | 10. wāirā (arrow)<br>laiā (plantain leaf)<br>meiā (torch)<br>nurā (girl)<br>marā (root)                              |
| 11. chenglou (appearance)<br>thinglou (mind)<br>chaamlou (plantain leaf)<br>maalou (cloth)<br>loklou (water)               | 12. chitmā (calf)<br>ichumā (my friend)<br>numā (girl/woman)<br>leima (lady)<br>rteimā (my sister-in-law)            |
| 13. panthou (father)<br>paathou (friend)<br>ningthou (king)<br>nongthou (sky god)<br>iputhou (my great<br>grand father)    | 14. namu (man)<br>samu (hand)<br>shāmu (elephant)<br>mukmu (cow)<br>khumu (oar)                                      |
| 15. iyuwā (my lord younger)<br>nayuwā (your lord)<br>naowā (young child)<br>nawā (your husband)<br>yāwā (voice/speech)     | 16. khaarec (paddy field)<br>chaarec (sapling)<br>paarec (son)<br>sharec (promise)<br>waarec (story)                 |

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>17. tarā (food)<br/> charā (meal)<br/> tālā (tree)<br/> maara (foot print or<br/>                                   foot step)<br/> khārā (shelve/horizontal<br/>                                   stretching over usually<br/>                                   water)</p> | <p>18. tayam (faithful attendant)<br/> tamba (man, specially forces)<br/> tālloi (wife)<br/> tubi (protector)<br/> tumbaa (bottle gourd)</p>  |
| <p>19. mitā (desire)<br/> khomtā (sucking)<br/> chātā (offspring)<br/> naotā (offspring)<br/> maitā (facial appearance)</p>  | <p>20. khoiyā (ant)<br/> peiyā (a flat bamboo piece)<br/> chariyā (smaller one)<br/> mituyā (un-inhabited ?)<br/> kamiyā (traveller ?)</p>  |
| <p>21. pari (unit of land measure,<br/>           equal to about 1 hectare)<br/> sangam (one fourth of pari)<br/> paral (one bunch unit of flat<br/>                                   pieces of bamboo)<br/> hārei (unit of yarn)</p>   | <p>22. pānā (administrative unit)<br/> salai (clan or ethnic unit)<br/> loop (organisational unit)<br/><br/> pānjal (scores in game, derived<br/>                                   from pānā + chal)</p> |

(B) The following are some of the short-sounded and less musical words both current and obsolete with English equivalents in bracket.

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|--|--|
| <p>1. kā (room)<br/> lā (plantain leaf)<br/> nā (ear)<br/> pā (eye lashes)<br/> shā (beast/meat)</p> | <p>2. ngā (fish)<br/> tā (spear)<br/> thā (moon)<br/> yā (tooth)<br/> wā (bamboo)</p>              |
| <p>3. hi (boat)<br/> mi (image)<br/> pi (tear)<br/> phi (cloth)<br/> ti (penis)</p>                  | <p>4. pai (grave)<br/> phāi (plain)<br/> lai (god/female organ)<br/> nai (pus)<br/> wai (husk)</p> |

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|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| 5. koi (mustache)     | 6. kei (tiger)            |
| khōi (navel)          | lei (tongue/flower)       |
| sōi (fishing ground)  | mei (fire)                |
| loi (degraded people) | pei (spleen)              |
| n oi (flatulence/sun) | phei (thigh)              |
| 7. kham (gold)        | 8. phou (paddy)           |
| khen (goat)           | lou (rice plant or field) |
| nam (water)           | rou (oar)                 |
| maak (fruit)          | mou (married girl)        |
| ton (plantain leaf)   | pou (bamboo pole)         |
| 9. chu (sugar cane)   | 10. yao (sheep)           |
| hoo (poison)          | kāo (bull)                |
| tū (hair on skin)     | thao (oil)                |
| koo (coffin)          | pao (news)                |
| loo (fishing trap)    | chao (big/great)          |
| 11. s̄ng (thigh)      | 12. yōt (iron)            |
| ȳng (pillow)         | pōt (article)             |
| ch̄ng (rice)          | kōt (barn)                |
| leng (shoulder)       | pōk (grey hair)           |
| peng (temperament)    | kōk (head)                |

We will analyse some of the words given above for their etymologic or roots. The words in Set A-1 like *heirāng*, *pirāng* etc. are of Ngāngoi (Anga) and Chakkha formations. The suffix *rāng* is a Ngāngoi suffix, but the word *tairāng* is a Tibetan Khamba origin which the Manipuri accounts write as the dialect of Khuman-Nongyai when they amalgamated with Khamba. This suffix *rāng* can be added to most of the common nouns, and also proper nouns e.g. *Moi-rāng*, *Kham-lāng*, *sham-lāng* (hair), *phi-rāng* (cloth) etc.

The words of Set A-2 are all Ngāngoi formations, while most of those words of Set A-3, 4, 5 and 6 are of Tibeto-Burman words of Mayang and Mangang formations, that is, a Bedo-Anga-Tai formations. The words of Set A-7 are the same formations as above but

with tints of Sakiyan dialects. The words of Set A-8 are mainly of Khamba origins with the Sakiyan suffix *ton* and those of Set A-9 and 10 are also of Bodo-Anga-Tai formations.

The suffix *rem* or *lem* are Mayang suffix later adopted by other tribes. We find Mayang names like Chingu-re (bi), Chiba-rem(bi) Langmei-rem(ba) etc. and later adopted by other tribes in the forms like Se-rem(bi), Sana-rem(bi) etc. The old Manipuri words like *palem*, *maalem* etc. are basic Mayang words

The words of Set A-10 are mainly Anga-Khamba formations with tints of Tibeto-Burman. The words of Set A-12 are all Sakiyan formations. The word *iteima* of this set may be disintegrated into *i-tei leima*. The word *tei* seems to mean the partner of an elder brother or sister and when the word *leima* is added it clearly gives the meaning sister-in-law. The word *i-tei leima* is shortened to *iteima*. Hence we find very frequently in different Manipuri accounts the phrase '*ma tei leima Leinaotabi*' while describing the activities of Poiraiton, meaning 'his sister-in-law Leinaotabi' and in the modern form it is '*maluma Leinaotabi*', and sometimes with the addition of a superfluous word *leima* like '*mutei-ma leima Leinaotabi*'. It may also be noted that the Manipuri word for brother-in-law (elder sister's husband) of a woman is called *itei* and this word is also used to address him by his sister-in-law (wife's younger sister). From this root word we get *na-tei*, *ma-tei* etc. meaning your brother-in-law, her brother-in-law etc. respectively.

Words of Set A-13 are all Mangang formations, that is, Bodo-Anga formations. In the word *panthou* the prefix word *pan* also pronounced as *pal* is an Anga word which means father, as in the word *i-pal* meaning my-father where *i* is the inflectional form of *ei* of the Sakiyan word. More details may be seen in subsequent parts. The suffix part *thou* is perhaps a Bodo origin meaning something like big or great as seen in the word *wongthou* which means chief of the sky but literally it means sky-god.

All words of Set A-15 are of Sakiyan formations while those words of Set A-16 to 22 are of Sakya-Moriya-Anga formations.

We will now investigate the origin of the word *tamba* of Set A-18. It is said that the earlier name of Ceylon is *Tamba-parani* which was perhaps given by the Mauryas (Moriyas). Taking the meaning of *Tamba* and another word *palli* which means 'the course of a dam or barrage' from the Manipuri source, the word *tamba-palli* would be something like an inhabited *palli* or narrow island conforming with the physical shape of the smaller islands stretching from the Indian peninsula to Ceylon proper. The words *parani* and *palli* are of the same words as 'r' and 'n' are interchangeable. Words with the suffix *palli* are frequently found to have been used in place names of South India, like Tiruchirapalli, and Khagempalli, Ayangpalli etc of Manipur.

Again there is another word *tayum* or *tayam* which gives a meaning like *tamba* but usually applied to inferiors e.g. *tayum achānba* meaning 'affectionate servant'. This word too seems to be a Moriyān origin.

The etymology of the Manipuri suffix *ma* seems to be a Sakiyan origin. The words given in Set-12 are all with this suffix. Besides these words, we also find words like *hai-ma* or *hei-ma* (an exclamation of surprise), *pari-ma* (mind), *lai-ma* (very or much) etc. This suffix may also be added to most of the verbs e.g. *ikai-ma* (ashamed), *hainei-ma* (is so said) etc. The original application of this suffix is similar to that of the Tibeto-Burman suffix *ba*.

When the word *hai-ma* is applied to *i-pema*, it gives *hei-ma i-pema* later compounded like *hei-ma-i-pema*, which in the modern connotation is an exclamation of surprise but originally an exclamation of surprise expressed to a sweet heart where *i-pema* means 'my affectionate girl'. The word *pema* is a Pali formation corresponding to later Sanskrit word *prema*. Hence the compounded word *hei-ma i-pema* is a Sakiyan origin.

In the word *ma-rā* of Set A-10, the suffix part *rā* is the root word meaning 'root', for example, *oo-rā*, *wā-rā* meaning root of tree, root of bamboo respectively and the prefix word *mā* is a pronoun meaning his or its. Again in the words *ma-ru* and *ma ruu* the

suffix words *ru* and *rū* are respectively bulb or underground stem and seed. More details may be seen in subsequent parts.

So far the Manipuri source is concerned, the dialects of Sakiya, Moriya and Anga are found to be almost identical except few different words, for example in the dialect of Sakiya girl is called *yābi* or *sābi* but in Moriya and Anga dialects it is called *nurā*. One distinct characteristic of the Moriyas is that they usually add their suffix *ya*, specially in proper names for example, the Moriya tribe is called *Mori* by the Sakiya and Anga, the Tibeto-Burmans used to call them *Mori-ba* by adding their suffix *ba*, where as the Moriyas used to call themselves *Mori-ya* by adding their suffix *ya*. Thus we find names of persons belonging to the Moriyas like *Kamiya*, *Santu-ya*, *Ngoubi-ya* etc. We pick up some basic monosyllabic root words like *pa*, *pu* (*bi*), *pu*, *nu* *sa*, *ru*, *cha* etc and see how they are agglutinated to form different words. It may be noted that the word *nu* is used as a suffix to mean 'the man' but in some dialects it is found to have been used as a feminine suffix. In the Sakiyan dialect from Manipuri source the word *nu* is found to have been used in both the senses, possibly a confusion. In the above mentioned word *nu-ba*, it is found to have been used to indicate female or woman and the suffix *-rā* as discussed earlier, means 'root' and connotes also the 'link source'. Thus *nu rā* means the link source to or root of womanhood', that is 'girl'. In some dialects *bi* is also used as feminine suffix and thus we find words like *nurā-bi* by adding further the suffix *bi* as in the dialect of Hangoi a cognate tribe of Ngāngoi having the same meaning with that of *nurā*. In the word *nu* the word *chā* is added in the prefix form and we get *chanu* meaning daughter. Again the word *chā* is added in prefix form to the word *nura* and we get the word *chanurā* which also gives the same meaning with that of *chanu*. It is also possible to have a word like *chanurābi*.

In the Sanskrit word formation we also find the same process operating, for example, the word *putra* is found to have been formed by the words *pu*, *ta* and *ra* where *pu* means father-progenitor as in

*pu-rol* and *pe-rol* meaning father's line and mother's line respectively, *ta* a common suffix like the Old Manipuri suffix 'O' and *rā* as stated above means a link source. So the word *pu-ta-rā* means the 'link source of father progenitor'. One difference in fusing the words *ta* and *rā* the consonents agglutinated with least vowel sound in between, where as in Mongoloid tongue they are more isolating. It is therefore possible to disintegrate Sanskrit words of Himalayan Mongoloid origins into root Mongoloid words, but it is not so with words of Aryan origins, for example, *Agni*.

Since Meiteilon is a mixed language it has a number of words for expressing the same thing. In most literary languages all the words are used as a single word to express the same thing e.g. *laija-ishing* for water, *korou-nongdon-atyā* for sky, *chakmom-khāmbi-mei* for fire etc. We give some examples of them as follows.

- |          |  |          |  |           |  |
|----------|--|----------|--|-----------|--|
| 1. Sky   | kōrou<br>nongdon<br>wāngban<br>atingā/atiya    | 2. Sun   | yōimayāi<br>taodanba<br>tumit<br>nurmit                        | 3. Cloth  | sāngding<br>konding<br>charei/cheirei<br>malei p̄h̄i |
| 4. Water | yī or ī<br>laija<br>ishing<br>lōklou<br>tamlen | 5. Cow   | chaklei<br>kāo<br>kaoren<br>mukmu<br>haimeichon<br>shamok/shan | 6. Air    | noong-sit<br>mālang<br>malayā<br>hoom-oiba           |
| 7. Fire  | chakmom<br>khāmbi<br>mei                       | 8. Paddy | loimom<br>thāngyī<br>phou                                      | 9. Fish   | wāgjeng<br>lemlei<br>ngā                             |
| 10. Moon | loidam<br>thāja<br>thā                         | 11. Gold | choinou<br>kham<br>sanā  | 12. Year  | lānghei<br>kumbā<br>ehahi                            |
| 13. God  | ching-oo<br>khoiyam<br>khoimom/lai             | 14. Iron | tetnou<br>yot  | 15. Arrow | waira<br>ten   |

We analyse some of the above as follows In the first set the word korou is a Mangang word i.e. Bodo-Anga formation , nongdon is a Khamba origin which literally means 'higher above the clouds', wāngban is a Chakkhan formation which literally means 'high-barrier' i.e. the firmament, and atingā/atiyā is also a Chakkhan origin which literally means the 'empty or void space'. In the second set, the word yōimayāi is also a Chakkhan origin which literally means the 'central source of light' taodanba is a Tibeto-Burman of Tai origin , tumīt is an Asiatic Man word , numīt is a Tibeto-Burman of Man origin ; and so on.

The dialects of Tai are numerous but the dialect which had impact on Meiteilon appears to be Shen Lao and Ngai Lao. The dialect of the Himalayan Mongoloids which became mixed with the Aryans are by now indistinguishable. The Tibetan language of today appears to have merged all the different dialects of which the Lhasa dialect is the lingua franca. We will examine some of the Tibetan words with special reference to the Kham-pa dialect which has some affinities with or impact on Meiteilon

English	Tibetan	Meiteilon	Remarks
1. Flower	metok	lei/leirāng	In Meiteilon their is a word <i>matok</i> which means the topmost blossoms or of bird's crest.
2. Lotus	pema	thambāl	In Meiteilon <i>pema</i> means affectionate girl.
3. Tree	shing-dong	pāmel/oo/tālā	In Meiteilon <i>shing</i> means firewood.
4. Sugar cane	ghu-shing	chu	
5. Rice	dei	cheng/phou	
6. Head	go	kok	
7. Ear	nā-chok	nā-kong	
8. Hand	lakpa	khut	
9. Eye	mig	mīt	



English	Tibetan	Meiteilon	Remarks
10. Thigh	lei-shā	pheipāk	
11. Nose	nā-bung	nā-ton	
12. Throat	mig-pa	khounao	
13. Skin	pakpa	unshā	In Meiteilon <i>pakpa</i> means to stick or attach.
14. Tear	mig- <i>chhoo</i>	pi	
15. Faeces	sokpa	amāngba/thee	In Meiteilon <i>sokpa</i> means 'to touch'.
16. Fire	mei	mei	
17. Water	chhoo	ishing	
18. Air	loong	noong-sit	
19. God	khun-chok	lai/chingu	
20. Physician	menpa	maipa	
21. Cloth	ghei	oharei/phi	
22. House	khāngpa	khāngpok/yum	
23. Lake	chho-jing	paat	
24. Hill	ri	ching	
25. Home	nang	yum/im	
26. Road	lam	lam-bi	In Meiteilon <i>lam</i> means 'land'.
27. Rain	chharpa	nong	
28. Bridge	jhampa	thong	In Meiteilon <i>jhampā</i> means an ornament of head.
29. Sky	nam	atiyā	
30. Heaven	lhā-yul	sarāren	
31. War	maak	laal	
32. Love	sei-wā	nung-shi-ba	
33. Hatred	nyingnei	tukachaba	
34. Anger	khongdo	ashaoba	
35. Fear	jhikpa	kiba	
36. Soul	nam sei	yaibi	
37. Life	mesei	thawai	

English	Mihetan	Meiteilon	Remarks
38. Mind	sem	pukning	
39. Voice	kal	khol/yāwā	
40. Knowledge	sheja	lou-shing	
41. Crying	ngu-wā	kappa	
42. Singing	lu-tang-wā	ishei sakpa	
43. Heat	drei	meishā	
44. Light	hei	mangāl	
45. Sound	dā	makhol	
46. Colour	tson	machu	
47. White	kārpo	a-ngouba	
48. Blue	ngoupo	sangbānaba	
49. Yellow	serpo	nāpu	
50. Red	mārpo	a-ngāngba	
51. To kill	seith-pa	haat-pa	
52. To sleep	nyal-pa	tūmba	
53. To climb	jeikpa	kāba	
54. To run	gyug-pa	chenba	
55. To stop	kag-pa	khamba/ lep-pa	In Meiteilon <i>kag- pa</i> means 'to cut'
56. To sit	dheipa	phamba	
57. To eat	jawā	chāba	
58. To plough	meipa	khoiba	
59. To wither	seithpa	khuiba	
60. To plant	tsukpa	thāba	
61. To boil	koelpa	phutpa	
62. To rot	rulpa	pumba	
63. To tear	relpa	chhetpa/segai	
64. To end	jakpa	lomba/loiba	
65. To partition	khā-thel-pa	khā-jan-pa	
66. One	ching	ama	
67. Two	nyei	ani	
68. Three	saom	ahoom	
69. Four	shi	mari	
70. Five	ngā	mangā	

English	Tibetan	Meiteilon	Remarks
71. Six	dhrug	taruk	
72. Seven	dhun	taret	
73. Eight	gyeth	nipal	
74. Nine	gu	māpal	
75. Ten	chu	tarā	

Some of the words very common to all Tibeto-Burman dialects are given below ·

pā (father)	sam (hair)
nu (woman/mother)	mai (face)
p <sup>i</sup> (grandmother)	mit (eye)
pu (grandfather)	khut (hand)
n <sup>i</sup> (aunt)	lei (tongue)
nau (daughter)	phei (thigh)
mi <sup>i</sup> (man)	kha (chin)
chā (son/daughter)	khe (leg)
mei (fire)	un (skin)
mou (married girl or daughter-in-law)	nā (nose)

Some of the words not very common to all Tibeto-Burman dialects except Meiteilon or Manipuri language are given below

chakmom (fire)	palem (mother)
chōinou (gold)	panthou (father)
loimom (paddy)	ishābi (elder brother)
lānglen (daughter)	tongyai (second son)
lemlei (fish)	paari (son)
yōimayi (sun)	masābi (husband)
taojing (fruit)	khōinou (friend)
wānglen (hour)	nayōn (your grandfather)
wāngle <sup>i</sup> (wine)	maalem (earth)

Some of the Austro Asiatic words found in Manipuri language are given below

English	Meiteilon	Austro-Asiatic	Remarks
Ginger	shing	sringavera	
Betal vine	tāmbula	tāmbala	In Manipuri it is used to mean a pack of betal nut and the vine leaf.
Ladies finger	belandri	—	Seems to be an Austric formation.
Hill	ching	sring	
Table land	thelong	thelong	Needs confirmation.

Some of the Kege words of Chinese origins are given below :

Bamboo cane	li	li
News	pao	pao
Paper	che	che
Metal currency	sel	sel

So far we have discussed some of the words of the Tibeto-Burman language family which are some of the basic components of Meiteilon. Now we shall discuss the Indo-Aryan dialects an altogether different stock of language which also became elements of Meiteilon. There are two sets of Indo-Aryan words, one set of it is the dialect of the Himalayan Mongoloids which became Indo-Aryans, rather which got merged with the Aryans. The said dialect may be termed as Mongolo-Aryan dialect instead of Indo-Aryan from which the Magadhi Pali developed. The formation of Magadhi Pali dates back to the first millennium B.C. The language flourished in the second half of that millennium among the learned men of Magadha proper. It is believed even during that period the Mongoloids of the outer regions continued to speak a mixed dialect. In the another set when the Magadhi Pali and other Indian dialects got mixed new dialects which are also known as Indo-Aryan dialects developed. These new dialects continued to develop as late as the 10th century A.D. The Bengali language which belongs to the Indo-Aryan language group is said to have developed by that period.

At present there is a controversy of Meiteilon as regards its origin. Some scholars say that Meiteilon is to be categorised in the Indo-Aryan languages while others say that it is a pure Mongoloid language. So we analyse a little more details for possible words of Indo-Aryan origin and finally draw our conclusions. In doing so we take some samplings of words as given below :

(A) Addressing nouns

Meiteilon	English	Indo-Aryan/Pali	Etymology
1 taada	brother	dādā	Himalayan Mongoloid, later called Modern Indo-Aryan.
2. maama	maternal uncle	māmā	—do—
3. khurā	uncle	khurā	—do— Possibly Nga (Anga) origin.
4. paaba	father	bāba	It is possible by adding the suffix '-ba' to pā, hence Tibeto-Burman.
5. paaji	father	bābāji	Modern Indo-Aryan.
6. sbellou	brother-in-law	shyalak	Himalayan Mongoloid.
7. sāgei	relative	swaki-ya	Himalayan Mongoloid.
8. pema/ pém-ma	affectionate girl	prema	A Pali form, in most words of Pali 'r' is dropped like <i>prya</i> for <i>prya</i> .
9. kuru/guru	preceptor	guru	Aryan origin.
10. tāu/tāl	rhythmic beat	tāl	Himalayan Mongoloid

(B) Nouns generally used in mystic :

1 korou	sky	golok	Himalayan Mongoloid
2. atingā/ atiyā	sky	aditya	—do—
3 amaiyah	physician	amivāh	—do—
4. ahing	night	ahan	—do—

5. ishei	song	ishei	Himalayan Mongoloid origin, also found in south Indian dialects. In Tibetan it is <i>shei</i> . In Manipuri too the root word for song is <i>shei</i> and <i>ishei</i> means 'my song' where 'i' is the inflectional form of <i>ei</i> .
6. tarang	wave	taranga	Himalayan Mongoloid
7. sanā	gold	sona/swarna	Aryan origin
8. ningai	argument	nyaya	Himalayan Mongoloid
9. konā	angle	kona	—do—
10. sarāren	sky-god	surendra	Mongolo-Aryan

## (C) Miscellaneous nouns :

1. pukhri	pond	pukuri	Indo-Aryan origin
2. khurum	saddle	kharam	—do—
3. kao	bull/cattle	gau	Indo-Aryan or Aryan
4. matok	head	mastak	Himalayan Mongoloid
5. kusā	skin	kusa	—do—
6. puk	abdoment	buk	—do—
(pi-buk)			
7. yot	iron	ayāh	—do—
8. yum	house	giyom	—do—
9. marāl	home/house	marāl	Himalayan Mongoloid. It is also found in old and obsolete Bengali using more or less in the same meaning, probably a Nga (Anga) origin.

10 sagol horse sāgol Himalayan Mongoloid origin, in modern Bengali this word is found with a different application. *Sagol* with different accent in Bengali means 'goat', a Nga (Anga) origin.

(D) Words of Vedic origin as found in vernacularised Tantric literature. Vedic word

1. kling	kling	[These words seem to be of Austric origin later added to early scripture except the last one meaning 'millennium'. There seems to be no English equivalent for the rest.]
2. shring	shring	
3. hoong	hoong	
4. ong	om	
5. chak	juga	

(E) Verbs .

The Tibeto-Burman suffix '-ba' or '-pa' is shown separated by a dash.

1. irāt-pa	to worship	irah	Himalayan Mongoloid
2. chat-pa	to go	chal	—do—
3. paa-ba	to read	par	—do—
4. chhet-pa	to tear	chheda	—do—
5. kham-ba	to end	kahya	Indo-Aryan origin.
6. pum-ba	to rot	puyā	Himalayan Mongoloid origin, but puyā is also meant old book or any other account in Meiteilon.

7. phut-pa	to boil	phut	Himalayan Mongoloid
8. shum-ba	to lull	shuyā	-do—
9. thā-ba	to plant	sthā	Mongoloid origin, the sound 'sth' is found to have changed to 'th' as in <i>Ko-sth</i> to <i>Ku-th</i> , meaning horoscope, similar to that of <i>sthaga</i> of Sanskrit to <i>thaga</i> of modern Indo-Aryan language, see Websters Dictionary.
10. hāt-pa	to kill	hata	Himalayan Mongoloid

## (F) Pronouns .

All pronouns found in Meiteilon are of Mongoloid origin excepting the following two.

1. ſhi	this	amin	Aryan origin
2. ādu	that	adās	Aryan origin

## (G) Interjections .

1. hoi	yes	haya	Aryan origin
2. mai	no	ma	Aryan origin

## (H) Compound words -

1. sundrang	void space	sula and taranga	Mixed origin
2. mondrang	an illusary	mana and taranga	Mixed origin
(in light 'o')	mind		
3. mōndrang	calm but	mana and taranga	Mixed origin
(in heavy 'o')	naughty behavior		
4. mītrang	magic/illusion	mit and taranga	Mixed origin
5. mōtrang	absent minded/ half illusioned	nā and taranga	Mixed origin
6. chōitrang	delirious with incoherent talks	choi and taranga	Mixed origin



7. *tarang* delirious with *choi* and *trang* Mixed origin. Both  
 incoherent talks the words are used  
 in a compounded  
 form like *Choitrang-*  
*patrang*.

(1) Miscellaneous :

(i) Words that the original application has practically changed :

- |                   |            |              |  |
|-------------------|------------|--------------|--|
| 1. <i>kai</i>     | coffin     | <i>kai</i>   | originally it was meant 'body' but now changed to coffin because of its association. |
| 2. <i>sanga</i>   | friendship | <i>sanga</i> | Originally it was meant an association but now changed to friendship.                |
| 3. <i>sanggoo</i> | group      | <i>sanga</i> |  |

(ii) All parts of bullock cart and command words to bulls are words of Indo-Aryan/Mongolo-Aryan origins.

Parts of bullock cart · *bam*, *hāl*, *dhorā*, *muruli* etc.

Command words · *ara*, *titi*, *rah* , besides *lānggol* for ploughing earth.

In the above mentioned words, it may be noted that words of mystic origin like *korou*, *sarāren*, *atingā*, *sanga*, *chak* etc. and verbs, pronouns etc. as shown in (C), (D) and (E) were perhaps the dialects of the Sakiyan tribes who moved to the east at about 200 B.C. and middle of the 3rd century A.D. Words like *tāda*, *māma*, *khurā*, etc. are believed to have been infused from Bangals and proto-Bangals at about 1250-60 A.D. The earlier words for *tāda*, *māma*, *khurā* were *ishabi*, *imān*, *itōn* respectively which were of Sakiyan words.

The word for sky-god, sometimes sky, is *Sarāren* (the modern pronunciation is *Sarāren*). However the word for sky is *atingā* (*AtiNga*) and also its other form is *Atiyā*, in parallel formation with the word *Moranga* (*MoraNgā*) and *Moriya* as found in Indian

sources. The word *Sarāren* can be split up into two parts *Sarā* and *ren*. The word *Sarā* means 'effusion' or 'outpouring of thoughts and feelings' in Manipuri language e.g. 'leipak sarā sal-le' meaning, say, the inflame 'spreads the whole country', and the suffix *ren* means 'chief' or 'king'. Thus the meaning of *Sarāren* is 'The Lord of that spreads far and wide'. The word *sarā* is also found using in the sense of sky like 'inung sarā teire' meaning 'night sky changed' which literally 'day break'. This is an old language but still found to have been used in literary writing with modern sound *sorā* instead of *sarā* possibly an influence of Bangal and Proto-Bangal. The modern counter-part of the above sentence is *āhing(gi)-atīyā-hong-le*. Words of *sarā* origin are also found in Indo-Aryan speeches. It is not known clearly whether the word is Himalayan Mongoloid origin or not but found to have been used by both of them. It is more likely to be of Himalayan Mongoloid origin. Even in the name *Bindu-sarā* the father of Asoka, the word *sarā* is found to have been used in the same sense. It is said that the body of *Bindu-sarā* is full of pox-marks, and since the *Bindu* i. e. point of pox-mark here, spreading over his whole body he was given the name *Bindu-sarā*. It may be mentioned here that the formation of the Indo-Aryan word *Indra* in suffix form of the Indo-Aryans of the later Vedic period is equivalent to the Mongoloid suffix *ren*. The formation of *Surendra* (*Sura* and *Indra*) is equivalent to *Sarāren*.

If the word *sara* is accented with a light long in the first vowel, it gives another meaning 'orphan' or 'unknown father' as found in the compounded word *lamja-sara*. The first word *lamja* is a Tibeto-Burman Mangang word whereas *sara* is either a Moriya or Chakkhan word. Both the words have the same meaning and they can be used as -lang as well as refined language according to the context. In slang both of them mean 'bastard' and in the refined language 'orphan'.

Besides the above mentioned words there are several words which had hitherto been taken as Aryan root words. We may cite some examples as follows.

The word *mithuna* the supposed Aryan word meaning sexual intercourse is also found as a basic Meiteilon word giving the same meaning often with the addition of the Tibeto-Burman suffix '-ba' in present form.

The half obsolete Meiteilon word *tubi* meaning 'protector of the masses' or 'Lord' is also found in the Vedic literature with the same meaning. In the R̥gveda we find words like *tubi jātā*<sup>1</sup>. Again in Meiteilon we find *Tubi Yoi Nongta* in the name of Nongta (Pakhangba) and statements like '*tubi ani khāchikna, lairen ani khāphāugnaphator*'<sup>2</sup>. In this statement *tubi* and *lairen* are of the same meaning but with different etymologies. *Tubi* is a Himalayan word.

Words like *mayim*, *rayim* etc are of similar formations. Of these two words *mayim* is found in Old Meiteilon like '*mayim lobi Mairema*', '*m yim Shelloy-Langmama*', whereas *rayim* is found in the Vedic literature meaning *lan* (wealth). Panditraj Atombapu Sharma comments that the word *rayim* as found in the Vedas means wealth and in Loukik the word *rayim* is found as 'rei' and from it the Meiteilon word *lan* is derived by interchanging 'l' for 'r'.<sup>3</sup> It may also be mentioned here that the word *rei* is very common in Old as well as Modern Manipuri languages. However the meaning of *rei* is found with a slightly different connotation but impliedly it means wealth. The word *rei* in Meiteilon means

1. R̥gveda : Anuvak I, Mandala I, Chapter I, sookta II, sloka IX ,

"Kavino Mitavaruna *tubi* jata urukshya  
Dakhang dadhapi apasam".

The meaning of the above passage is, "Let Mitavaruna who was born in *tubi* jata (the birth of the protector of the masses), who had several abodes, who had wisdom (of the sistras), nourish our strength and vigour".

The Vedic word *tubi* jata is equivalent to the Meiteilon words like *tubi mapok ta*, *tubi chagok-ta*, *tubi jat-ta*.

2. Ningthourol Lamibun, edited by O Bhogeswar Singh, page 98.

3. Panditraj Atombapu Sharma, R̥gveda Samhita, Chapter 1, page-52.

'possessor', for example, Yao-rei(ba), Kai-rei(ba), Poi-rei(tōn) etc. In these words Yao-rei(ba) means 'possessor of sheep' and impliedly wealth in terms of sheep; Kai-rei(ba) means 'possessor of hens and impliedly wealth in terms of hens, and so on. In modern Meiteilon the word *rei* comes as suffix forms and when it stands alone 'r' is interchanged to 'l' and we get '*lei*'. However there is a tendency of totally replacing *rei* by *lei*. In the above words Yao, Kai, and Poi are Tai words meaning sheep, hen and goat respectively; *rei* is a Himalayan word meaning wealth, and (ba) a Tibeto-Burman suffix. Again the Gypsy word *rei* or *rai* meaning 'lord' from which the English word *rye* derived is the same formation with that of the Sanskrit word *rajan*<sup>4</sup>. The Gypsies are said to be dark skin caucasoid people found throughout the world, and believed to have originated from India. The word *lai* by interchanging 'l' for 'r' in *rai* is the word for god in the dialect of some Himalyan tribes is also synchronous with the name of a Tai tribe Lai. Thus it is seen that the etymology of the modern Manipuri word '*lai*' is the same as that of the Sanskrit word *rajan*.

The Meiteilon word *arang* meaning 'bright' is also found in the Vedic literature with more or less the same meaning. In Vedic literature we find words like *arang kṛto*<sup>5</sup> meaning 'refined' or 'brightened'.

The word *ahang* is found both in Vedic and Meiteilon words with slight differences in connotations. In Meiteilon *ahang* means 'ego' or 'egotism' but in Vedic it means 'I' or 'me'.

The Manipuri word *pothi* is perhaps a Pali formation corresponding to the Sanskrit word *buddhi* with slight differences in their connotations. The word *pothi* means some ways or means of achieving solutions of an unsolved problem by applying intelligence or wisdom, but *buddhi* means simply intelligence. In modern Manipuri both words *pothi* and *buddhi* are used in the above

4 See Websters Dictionary

5 Rgveda : Anuvaka I Mandala I Chapter I sookta II sloka '1, ' and Anuvaka I Mandala I, chapter I sookta XIV sloka V.

stated senses and in addition to that the word *buddhi* is also used to mean 'the thinking', e.g. *Kari buddhi touri* ? meaning 'What are you thinking' ?

The current Manipuri word *thok* meaning 'cheat' or 'pretence' when used alone or like *thok touba* meaning 'to cheat' or 'to pretend', and when used with another verb like *thok chat-pa*, it means a swindler who moves about to cheat others is a Pali origin corresponding to the Sanskrit word *sthaga* meaning 'to cheat' or 'a rogue'. The Prakrit formation of this word is *thaga*. The original meaning of the Manipuri word *thok* or *thok chat-pa* is that of a person who was a worshipper of Kali or a member of a religious organisation who robbed by cheating and sometimes murdered in the service of Kali the goddess of destruction when there was the strongest image of Tantric culture and Saktism in the valley in the pre-Pamheiba period. This is also the original meaning of the Sanskrit word *sthaga*. It is therefore seen that the Chakkhan sound *tha* is equivalent to *stha* of the Sanskrit. Hence we find words like *tha(ba)* meaning 'to plant', *kuthi* meaning 'horoscope' etc. corresponding to the Sanskrit words *stha* (to plant), *kosthi* (horoscope) etc

In obsolete Manipuri, village is called *kām* (also pronounced as *gām*) possibly a Sakya dialect, which in turn a Pali formation corresponding to the Sanskrit word *grām*. This word is usually found in combination with the word *khun* meaning 'village' as in *khun-kām* like the combination of *taoba-hui*, *shingyel-leirāng*, *laija-ishing* etc and sometimes alone as in *Loushi-kām* where *Loushi* is a name of a village. The word *khun-kām* is found in Ningthourol Lumbuba while describing a quarrel between Yaoreibas and their neighbours over the loss of chicken, goats, pigs etc., quoting the text which states, "Yaoreiba mashābina, khun-kām ishānou-O". While the latter word *Loushi-gām* means 'Loushi village' like *Chatta-gram*, *Nanda-gram*, *Bhanu-gram* etc. is found in a fable in which an unfortunate girl named *Hāoshi Namoy-nu* changed her form and became a *haari-ningnāng* (modern pronunciation is *haari-nongnāng*) an insect called cicada, the male of it produces loud

songs by vibrating tymbal organ at the base of the abdomen at about 4,500 cycles per second, when her step mother known as Ngānurol Loushi gām chanu who held from a village named Loushi and who belonged to a Ngānu tribe hit on her head by a bamboo spoon that stirred soup. This insect is also simply called *haari* indicating *haari* and *nongnāng* are words different dialects, possibly *haari* a Chakghan word and *nongnāng* a Tibeto Burman word.<sup>6</sup>

- 6 The fable narrates how a girl named Haoslu Namoy nu of a Luwang family who had been brought up by her step mother commonly called Ngānurol Loushi-gam chanu who held from Loushi village and belonged to a Ngānu tribe, became a *haari-nongnang*

One day Haoslu Namoy-nu requested her step mother Loushi-gam chanu to permit her to play a game of 'kaang' with her fellow girls who had fixed a match of the game.

"Hoi, palem Loushi-kam chanu-O, namom eikhoibu ashu korou numitta lamtha kaang mingtam chukphi paitam laknasi panjal nani tanuase hanadi shingnare".

And she would do the next day all hard works of carrying paddy from the barn of her father which was away

"Hayeng lorou sora ngal leimu laba chasak ada, leihou laba mangal tarabada namom eikhoibu ipal gi lawai keirel atamlada, namom eikhoma ipal gi kua thongtek look, changbi panphoi lokpu, namom eikhoma lita thongna, ita eikhoi lawai phoukang lang uge hatabara

But the wicked mother insisted on her doing the work right on that day and not the next day

"Palem Loushi kam chanu paima phattabi taojing heigum shubina, Hoiy inom poma O, napal ei gi keira thongtek look, changbi panphoi lookpu cheng pot lookta thongna lawai atambadagi keirel koina purak o, hanati thousi khive "

Although Haoslu Namoy nu was a courageous girl, yet she had to obey the command of her step mother. So she went to collect paddy from the barn of her father, and when she returned with a heavy load, all her cloths were wet due to profuse sweating and had not taken rest, her step-mother who was found cooking, holding a bamboo spoon, again entrusted her for pounding rice "

This fable has much impressed the people of Manipur that they hesitate to strike the head of anyone by a spoon which stirs food while cooking.

Most Indian scholars interpret the words of Sanskrit as purely of Aryan origin. It may not be correct. There was a Mongoloid empire and civilization at the time of the advent of Aryans. The earlier Mongoloids got mixed with the Aryans in course of time. It is very doubtful that there will neither be the image of the Mongoloid language nor the image of their culture in the setup of the so-called the Vedic people, and at the same time the language and culture of the major chunk of the population would have vanished into the air. It would be unimaginable to assume that the dialect of the tribe to which Gautama Buddha the founder of Buddhism belonged, to which the emperor Asoka belonged would have been null. The tribes to which these two figures belonged were the Himalayan tribe Chakkha ( Sakya ) and their clans. However by their time there was a strong impact of the Aryans on their society. It would be no wrong to say that the development of Buddhism was mainly based on the opposition of the Arya Dharma which was by that time based on animal sacrifices. Buddhism failed to embrace the Aryan society in general, but it penetrated towards the Mongoloid world.

It is believed that several of the words which are now said as Aryan words were of Mongoloid origin, particularly the dialect of the Himalayan tribes. The mixed dialect of Aryan and Mongoloid

“Mamom Haoshi Namoy-nu louthabana mapalgi lawai atambadagi nura chengpot luthong pot puna maral ontarakpada mapal-gi maral loyum yourakpada mapal-gi phamlam khongkhangba phalam phamphatarangeida, nura chengpot halwai potpu tharam thaphattarangeida palem mama chapu tilang soukina, palem poktapinkina thouchet thoukaibu thothangamye”.

At this attitude of the step-mother, Haoshi Namoy-nu was much offended and replied,

was indeed Pali. Siva is not an Aryan god and hence a non-Aryan word, but it is generally taken as Aryan word. Similarly the word *linga* is very doubtful to be of Aryan origin. The phallic worship was associated with the worship of Siva and hence *Siva linga* was derived. The word *linga* is not found in the Rgveda Samhitas. The Aryan word for *linga* is said to be *sisna* as found in the text of the Rgveda. It is not known what would have been the pronunciation of *linga* in the Mongoloid tongue. It is most likely *linga* (लिंग) was pronounced as Lei-Nga (लेङ्ग). More details may be seen in the section on Pre-Aryan Mongoloids and their culture. Thus contrary to the earlier belief, it was borrowed by the Aryans which they used to denote gender also. It is equally doubtful that the word *tandava* a name of a dance believed to have been performed by Siva, is of Aryan origin. As *l* and *n* are interchangeable and *da* also can be pronounced as *ta* in the Mongoloid tongue, *tan* is equivalent to *tal* where the latter is taken as an Aryan word to mean the synchronic rhythms in dance and music. The word *tantara* may also be pronounced as *taltara*. In living Manipuri language, *tan-ta-va* means synchronised rhythms where *tal* or *tan* is generally claimed to be an Aryan origin i.e. Sanskrit word. It is not known whether it is a chance of coincidence or not. In the absence of concrete historical evidence it is not possible to give any assertive decision as yet, however the racial elements that constituted the Meiteis or Manipuris strongly indicate an affirmative decision. *Tāl* or *tān* is also a word for an ornament worn

"Palem uma Nganuro! Loushu kam (chanu-O, namom eibu nura chengpot hallwai potpu tharam thapattaringoda, nura-gi lolou namkhum yi, nuja kanak khoitom yi, humang sekloy kanak yi-pu kanglam kantaringebu, karigi sukmu leitam thennati lomom kuro! hu-o kariki hapa-no."

The step-mother Loushi-gam chanu became infuriated when she heard the reply of her daughter and said, why she should disobey her.

"Hey! imom nangdi napal eighi thouchet thouchai khol-bu karigi wakanlakabano".



by dancers. The words like *tān-jā tān-chā-ba, tān-yei-ba* etc. meaning synchronised-moment, convenient-moment, beater of hour etc. respectively are derived from the word *tān*.

In Old Manipuri the Sanskrit word *rājā* is found to have been written as *lāchā*, where the last part *jā* is expressed as *chā*. The early Sakya tribe also pronounced the word *rājā* as *lājā* as seen even in Asokan period. In the Bhabra edict of Asoka it is found to have written 'piyadasi laja Magadhe' meaning 'Piyadasi the king of Magadha' where Piyadasi is Priyadarsi of Sanskrit. The word for peacock in the dialect of the Sakya tribe to which Gautama Buddha belonged to is *morā* and the Sanskrit word is *mayura*. *Morā* is also said by some scholars to be a Pali word. It is not known who borrowed it.

Evidently it is seen from the above analysis that we had been looking things from the wrong end so long. It is the Sanskrit which absorbed or borrowed from other languages and refined them to suit their tongue and hence Pali is the mother of Sanskrit. So the conclusion would be that the words found in obsolete as well as current Manipuri which are also found in either Old as well as latter Sanskrit, which we say Pali formations are indeed true Manipuri words that had been borrowed by Sanskrit. Hence Sanskrit is not a pure Aryan language but a mixed language of

And she then hit on the head of Haoshi Namoy-nu by the bamboo spoon which she held. There was profuse bleeding on the head of Haoshi Namoy-nu.

"Haina lemlei ngaot loi noinu thumtang cheina,  
Meiting-ngu Nuyam Phaba, Ngangkha lamlok chei,  
langlen kongyang watang khaibi khaeina tangja  
luwairenda chepirakpagi imu paktakna ingang  
pamphehnare".

The poor girl cried and said that she would like to live on this earth as she was very much ashamed before the neighbours and lamented standing leaning on the door with a sobbing voice, and said,

"Hey palem ima Nganuroi Loushi-kam ohanu-O,  
taojing heigum shillabi, ngairong shingkup sarabi-O,

early Indian dialects which were a mixed product of Mongoloids and pre-Dravidoids and latter mixed with the Aryan dialect, which became known as the Indo-Aryan dialects and were born in northern India. It is the western stream of this Mongoloid who not only dispersed in northern India and took part in the formation of the so-called Indo-Aryan dialects, but also dispersed in the European sub-continent where they got mixed with the Caucasoids and gave birth to the Indo-European family of speeches. So the prefix Indo in the above two languages, represents that particular branch of the Mongoloid

The suffix *-son* in Meiteilon or Manipuri language indicates something young or youngest, or something topmost part of an object like tree or plant or stem or hill or building or life, and so on. The etymology of this suffix may be linked up with the Chakkhan (Sakiyan) formation. This suffix has a parallel or similar formation with that of the Sanskrit suffix *-tan*. The family of language to which Sanskrit and English belong, is said to be the Indo-European family of languages. The suffix *-son* is also found in English proper names like Pemberton, Britton, Newton, Washington, Norton etc. and words like *singleton*, *simpleton*, *usanton* etc. Just as in Manipuri proper names like Poireiton, Yoiboston, Heston, Sanaton, Tonton (Tondon in modern form) etc. and words like

namom eidi tabung nungsa palta namu pang-budi  
vinaei panngemiaroiye, thangnga ireikai leikai spai  
sangki ita loma singbu tangja ikai wa humya:  
selkoiye. Hameta thongahm lakchun panati langlan  
kongyang wakhaibu suna ymehel shako nareng  
thakta paktu ikai khangna huoharikki kholtem kura  
mikapunna lamangbu tengthamena mikaphura"

She then gradually changed her form to a cloud.

The impression of this fable is so strong on the Manipuri society till this date that an angry mother scolds her annoying children in the kitchen, "*Nakhai khabei-sina nakokto shaduna haari-nongnang onduna tokkani*", meaning 'You all will change to cicadas by hitting on your heads by this spoon'.

*maton*, *haston*, *witon* etc. The etymology of the English suffix *ton* is not clearly known but found it to be a very popular suffix specially in proper names. However in a particular case i.e. in the word or the name *Newton* it is said to have derived from the Anglo-Saxon word or suffix *ton* meaning town. But in the case of *Briton* and *singleton*, it appears, interpretation or explanation does not give proper justification. It is therefore certain that this suffix is either a loan word or an old word whose etymology is lost in obscurity. In the above stated words *singleton*, *simpleton*, *wanton* the suffix *-ton* gives a super-superlative degree in singularity, simplicity, and wantage respectively but in no way it gives the meaning of town. We give some examples of them as follows : (1) *Moirang Thoibi* was a *singleton* among the girls of *Moirang*. The Manipuri equivalent here is *tom-thin*. (2) *Tomba* is a *simpleton* and that is the reason why he is easily deceived. The Manipuri equivalent here is *champhoot*. (3) *Sahasarjuna* was a *wanton* murderer. The Manipuri equivalent here is *haalengd iba*. These examples clearly suggest that the English suffix *-ton* gives a similar meaning with that of the Manipuri suffix *-ton*. Hence the suffix *-ton* found in English and Manipuri is of the same origin.

Again the Manipuri suffix *-ton* is often get confused with another suffix *tom*. Formerly, the suffix *ton* is used as the highest or uppermost limit, and the lowest being the antonym suffix *tom*. When the youngest child of a parent is referred to the confusion is arisen, perhaps out of the conflict of the measure where the eldest child is taken the uppermost limit the youngest is called *Tom(ha)*, *Tom(bi)* etc. and on the other hand if the youngest is taken as the last limit of the parent the child is often referred to with the suffix *ton*, for example, *Hai-ton*, *Khom-ton* etc. In old names we find people called *Khoi-tom*, *Man-tom* etc. Now the suffix *tom* is rarely used except in proper names like *Tom-cha*, *Tom-chou* etc. where *cha* meaning 'small' and *chau* meaning 'big' or 'great' are of Tibeto-Burman and Chinese origins respectively, in parallel formation with the English names like *Tom-thumb*, *Tom-brown* etc. and the Sanskrit names like *Purusa-tom*, *Nicha-tom* etc. Hence in conclusion

the words *ton* and *tom* either in suffix or in prefix form found in English, Sanskrit and Manipuri are of Chakkhan origin.

We may cite here some examples of common words for all these languages. There are words like (1) *neowā*, (2) *naowā*, (3) *nava* (4) *nobo* and (5) *nayā* which have the same meaning. The word *neowā* is an Anglo-Saxon word meaning new or something young ; *naowā* is a Manipuri word meaning young or new ; *nava* is a Sanskrit word meaning young or new ; *nobo* is a Bengali word with the same meaning as the Sanskrit word *nava* and *naya* a Hindi word with the same meaning as that of the Sanskrit word *nava*. Of these five words *nobo* and *nayā* are the youngest and are believed to have been formed in the 11th or the 12th century A.D., *neowā* and *naowā* are the oldest. The modern English word *new* is said to have derived from the Anglo-Saxon word *neowā*, the Sanskrit word *nava* is derived from the word *naowā*. It may be noted that *naowā* is a living Manipuri word and as stated earlier it is of Chakkhan origin.

The obsolete Meiteilon word *Ougri* which originally means 'secret rituals' or 'secret worship' usually taught in secret to the heir apparent of a throne but later changed to singing with merry-makings in religious functions as seen from accounts and traditions that prince Hongnem-yoy Khunjao (Naothingkhong c 1215-50 A.D.) received instructions on the hymns of *Ougri* from Hongnem the Luwang king but later changed to singing with merry-making from the period of Loiyumba (c 1310-36 A.D.) as recorded in the Cheitharol Kumbaba, has the same formation with the Germanic word *Orgi* (*Orgia* in plural) from which the English word *Orgy* derives. The meaning of the Germanic word *Orgi* is 'secret rituals' or 'secret worship' but the English word *Orgy* (pronounced as *orji*) means celebration with wild merry-makings.

The Manipuri interjection *hey* in flate tone intonation used as an exclamation to attract attention or in asking a question is found to have the same meaning with the English interjection *hey* which

is said to have derived from the Germanic word *hei* with a little difference in the intonation. In current Manipuri the same word *hei* is found with a decorative suffix *mā* as in *hei-mā* an exclamation of surprise where *hei* in the root word.

We also find the middle English word *yarwe* meaning 'ready' and Anglo-Saxon word *iw* or *eow* 'meaning 'tree', *wann* meaning fading of colour etc. have the words with the same meaning *yāre*, *u(oo)*, *wān-thaba* etc. respectively in Manipuri.

The English woman forenames like Pamela, Sheila, Ida, Lisa, etc. could have originated from the Mongoloid words *Pāmel* (tree), *Shei* (song), *Itā* (my friend in feminine form), *Leisā* (a girl or a hair style) etc. respectively with the decorative suffix *la* in the former two cases.

The dialect of early Poirei or obsolete Meiteilon has words with similar or parallel formations with that of, particularly, Old Norse, Old Saxon, Old High German, Anglo-Saxon etc. which are grouped in the Germanic language of the Indo-European family of Languages.

Hence the image of the presence of an ancient race of people who dispersed from their primeval home, possibly the Pamir plateau, towards the European continent as far as Norway and the Indian sub-continent and who constituted the so-called Indo-European family of speech in the Meitei setup is evidently seen from the above analysis.

The first part *i* in the obsolete Manipuri word *i-yuwā* generally stands for 'my' and *-yuwā* connotes something youngership with compliments. Thus *iyuwā* mean, 'my lord the younger' which is evident from the accounts of Manipur that Ngangoi Yoimongba a chief of Ngā (Anga) tribe first addressed prince Poireiton with the word *ichuma* meaning 'my friend', but later apologized when Poireiton disclosed his identity and said "You are not *ichuma*, you are *iyuwā*". The Sanskrit word *yuva* in *yuva-rajā*, *yuva-janata* etc. is perhaps derived from the Chakkhan word *-yuwā*. As in the previous case *wa* is changed to *va* and hence *yuwā* of *i-yuwā* is

rendered in *yauz*. It is this *yauz* that becomes a Sanskrit vocabulary meaning 'young'. It may be noted that *wā* means *mother* or *husband* in living Manipuri language as in *i-wā* meaning 'my husband'. Most scholars of Manipur interpret the meaning of *i-yawā* as 'grand father' which is not acceptable.

Conversely we may also project probable Sanskritised formations from the Mongoloid words. The Aryans pronounced the 'ai' sound of the Mongoloid as 'i' in their own way or style.

Words of Mongoloid origin      Probable Sanskritised formations

'ai'	'i'
(a) Meirā (torok)	Mirā
Leichhāvi (a girl or a hair dressing)	Lichhavi
Leinaeta (flower that blooms later)	Linouta/Linota
I-teimā (my sister-in-law)	Itama
I-tei (my change i.e. closure)	Iti
(b) lei (flower)	li/zi
melei (an orchid)	meli
chamelai (jasmine)	chameli
khongamela (an orchid)	khongameli
sephāli (a kind of flower)	sephāli
kādāmbalei (a kind of orchid)	kādambari
(c) leikā (petal)	likā
jabā-leikā (petal of jaba)	jabālikā
ambā-leikā (petal of amba)	ambālikā
mal-leikā (petal of mal)	malikā
sephā-leikā (petal of sepha)	sephālikā
thambāl-leikā (lotus petal)	thambālikā
(d) leimā (princess/queen)	limā/rimā
Prāi-Leimā (princess Irai)	Iralimā
Mādhu-Leimā (princess Madhu)	Madbulimā
Orabi-Leimā (princess Orabi)	Orabirimā
Tanu-Leimā (princess Tanu)	Tanurimā
Lam-Leimā (princess of land)	Lamrimā

- (e) khāla (paddy field, also spelt  
as khānāci)                      khāri                      This word khāri  
is also found in  
old Manipuri.
- tōrei (whirl pool current)                      tōri  
charei (cloth)                      sāri  
khorōci (pencil)                      khorōci/khorji  
khāci (towel)                      khāci
- (f) The Mongoloid sound tha is also sometimes pronounced as stha  
in the Sanskritised formations.
- |                     |                                       |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------|
| tha                 | stha                                  |
| thei-ba (siding)    | sthir/sthita                          |
| tham-ba (to keep)   | sthamba                               |
| thou (work, hasten) | sthu                                  |
| nā-thei (to hide)   | nasthi                                |
| tharo (lily)        | sthala (like sthala-kamala<br>flower) |
- (g) Some assorted words.
- |                           |        |
|---------------------------|--------|
| shan (cattle, sha + ahan) | shanda |
| ohā (offspring)           | jāh    |
| khut (hand)               | ghut   |
| lou (rice plant or field) | ruh    |
| (ma)-rū (seed)            | i-rū   |

Some of the words given above, for example; thambālikā may not be found in the Sanskritised structures in Sanskrit texts. It is a demonstration of Sanskritisation of the words thambāl and laikā. The word thambāl is not to be found in the words of the Himalayan Mongoloids as it is a Tai word originated from Khunjal a Tai tribe.

The phallic worship is associated with Siva cult. Had it originated from the Himalayan Mongoloid tribes who developed the Siva cult the word *linga* should have a meaning in their dialects. As discussed earlier Lei is pronounced as Li and Ngā as ngā, *linga* could have been LeiNgā (လိင်္ဂ). In Manipuri culture female organ is represented by flowers particularly lotus in literature.

*Livia minor* is generally given the name *Lei-nā* (petal) in literature like *Leikā* where the latter gives emphasis on the stalk of the petal. Again in the Tibetan Language thigh is called *Lei-shā*. As for male organ it is untraceable but *Lei-Ngā* seems to give a meaning something like 'flower king'. Female organ is also called 'lai' in modern Manipuri language. It may not be far wrong to assume that in the culture of these Himalayan tribes spoke 'lei-nā' for female organ and 'lei-ngā' for male organ in literature. It is therefore most probable from the Mongoloid word *Lei-Nga* the Sanskrit word *linga* is derived. The word *linga* became a vocabulary of Sanskrit denoting 'gender' in grammar also. It may be noted the word *lei* meaning garland or wreath of flower in Austro-polynesian dialects is also the same formation. In modern Manipuri ear ring is also called *lei*.

(J) Case endings · The case endings *ki* and *gi*.

Manipuri language uses several case ending particles of which we pick up *ki* and *gi*. When these two endings came into use, only the particle *ki* is found to be in vogue. In obsolete Manipuri *ki* is found to have been used as *ke*. This is perhaps the early Meiteis had no sound for *ga*, they had only *ka* and so in old language we find only *ki*. By gradual change with the adoption of more sounds the particle *gi* came into use. Now the application of *ki* and *gi* alone becomes a grammar. In early Manipuri the case endings were very limited rather there were more inflectional forms. We come across in old language several words with little case endings applied, for example, *iyenchā*, *iokohā* etc. When these words are disintegrated they become *i-yen-cha* and *i-ok-cha*, where *i-yen-chā* means 'my-hen-small' and *i-ok-chā* means 'my-pig-small'. It is seen that instead of using or applying case ending particle the word *ei* meaning 'I' has changed to *i* meaning 'my'. The modern form of *iyenchā* is *ei-gi-yen-ma-chā* where *gi* and *ma* are inflectional particles. Similarly the word *iokcha* is also changed to *ei-gi-ok-ma-chā*.

As late as the middle of the 20th century A.D., in some remote corners of Manipur, sentences of the following types were found to



have been used. The sentence is an affirmative form with limited use of proper case endings, but by the action of the talker it indicates an interrogative sentence. *Nama keithel ba(i) ba(de)* meaning 'your mother market goes market not goes' which literally means 'Has your mother been to market?'. The modern form is *Na-ma keithel ka-khi-ba-ra ka-khi-da-ba-ra ?*

(K) Successive adding of case endings :

Unlike other languages Meiteilon has developed peculiar types of words in which different case endings have been successively added to the word giving different meanings and senses. It shows that some sort of drilling in the art of using case endings were practised. An example of it is given below.

Chā-ba (meaning 'to eat')  
 Chā-ba-gi  
 Chā-ba-gi-da  
 Chā-ba-(gi)-da-gi  
 Chā-ba-(gi)-da-gi-ni  
 Chā-ba-(gi)-da-gi-ni na, and so on.

By performing permutation and combination of adding the case endings it is possible to have several words originating from the word *chaba*. The structure of case ending is found to have changed to *Cha-ka-ta-ne* and finally to *Cha-ga-da-ni*. Again in early Meiteilon we find words like *leiyathi*, *haotamithi* etc. which when analysed to modern Manipuri context, it is seen that they are *leiba-yaba-thiba* and *Hao-tamthiba* respectively. It indicates modern Manipuri contains much Tibeto-Burman suffix '-ba' or '-pa' than early Meiteilon an indication of pressure of Tibeto-Burman dialects on the language.

The Tibeto-Burman suffix *-ba* is also found in the different dialects of Magadhi origin spoken in Bihar, and also in Bengali and Assamese specially in root verbs indicating impact of the Tibeto-Burmans. Thus we find sentences like, in the dialects of Bihar: *Kak chalba* ; in Manipuri: *Katai (Kadai) chailiba* ; in Bengali: *Kothai cholibo* ; in Assamese: *Kot jabo*, where *ja* is a

later pronunciation of *cha*, etc. The impact of Tibeto-Burman dialects on Magadhi dialects cannot be expected to be much earlier than the 9th century A.D. The similar words in the different dialects mentioned above are perhaps Nga (Anga) origin.

The Hindi word *mei* meaning 'I' with a little nasal sound is probably derived from two words by compounding them, namely *mi* and *e* (*mi + ei*) meaning 'man' and 'I' respectively where *mi* is a Tibeto-Burman origin. Similarly the word *ādmi* is also derived from two words *ād* and *mi* where the word *ād* is a form which gives a meaning something like 'other' or 'that'. In a likewise manner the Bengali words *ā-mi* and *tu-mi* are also derived from Mongoloid root word *mi* where the prefixes *ā* and *tu* indicate some forms of 'I' and 'you' respectively. The Assamese word *moi* meaning 'I' too seems to have derived in the nature of Hindi formation as above with the Tibeto-Burman suffix 'O' as *mi-O* | *ei* = *moi*. It may be mentioned here that the Old Manipuri word for man is *tamba* and *tayam* before adopting the Tibeto-Burman word *mi*.

We may investigate some word formations in the following sentences :

(1) Hindi : *Mei chalte-chalte thak-gayi*, (2) Bengali : *Ami chalte-chalte thok-goise*, and (3) Manipuri : *Ei chatna-chatna choktha-rakyi*. In the above sentences the words *mei* and *ā-mi* are mixed formations and *ei* is an original word. The words *chalte*, *cholte* and *chatna* are all of Sakiyan origins. In the words *thak-gayi*, *thok-goise* and *choktha-rakyi* the root word is *tha* corresponding to the Sanskrit formation *sitha*. With this root word we find several Manipuri words like *pat-tha* (to weather), *wān-tha* (fainting, fading), *chat-tha* (proceed on), *mon-tha* (smoothen), *kān-tha* (quilt) etc.

The word *kāntha* is probably derived from the way with which the quilts were originally made. The quilts were originally made by stitching together pieces of worn out cloths piled into layers with a cover.

Our next approach will be the investigation on, how and when the sophisticated use of case endings started. Was it a spontaneous growth out of necessity? The use of case endings are found in all the three linguistic groups of Tibeto-Burman dialects namely Burmese, neo-Burmese and Tibeto-Burman and the Himalayan dialects quite early before they fused together. But the use of it was not much sophisticated as found when the three groups merged into a single unit. Upto about 1200 A.D. the use of case endings was very much limited and most of our literary works were written by about the 16th century A.D. and were then copied and re copied, but few of them were written by about 1600 A.D. Taking the earlier date, it is most likely that the scholars of that period would have taken the context from their elders who maintained the story or the account through oral transfer. There is also every possibility that the elders used earlier language than that of their own. In this way they could transfer and reproduce the language spoken some 10 or 15 generations ahead of them. So it is estimated that they could transfer the language of about 1350 A.D. at the earliest. Literary sources do not indicate the sophisticated use of case endings was in vogue at about 1450 A.D. As time passed on the above referred *Iyenoha* structure is found to have changed to *Ei-gi-yen-ma-cha*. It is therefore presumed that the sophisticated use of case endings started from about 1350 A.D. at the earliest.

It is also not known how far the oral transfer could give the picture of the dialect of the early Poireis of about 800 A.D. We are relying mainly on the literary source of the later period. It is also seen that, if, Meiteilon is left alone there is a tendency of changing the word forms instead of adding case endings. The impact of other external force is not ruled out.

It is seen in history section that Meiteilon had a contact for the first time the Indo-Aryan language, an altogether different family of language at about 1225 A.D. It was the dialect of Bangals and proto-Bangals now obsolete. As stated earlier the dialect of Bangal was born at about 1100 A.D. By about 1225

A.D. she was also hardly on her feet. In Bengal today the language of about 1100 A.D. is taken as obsolete language.

It has been discussed in history section that the Bangal had matrimonial relation with prince Naothingkhong of Poiroi. Since then a social intercourse started between the principality of Poiroi and the Lamangdong principality of Basis. It is a natural course of a language when two groups of people speaking different languages mixed socially by trade and commerce, by intermarriages and by other forms of social contact of recognised social institutions, the two languages got mixed. As discussed in the Poiroi Meitei, the Bangals and the Basis lived together with them with all norms of social contact. They influenced the spiritual life of the Poirois. The myth and concept of fresh wave of Saivism had a strong impact on the social setup of the Poirois. All these processes exposed sufficiently for the image of the new stock of Indo-Aryan language on Meiteilon. The exposure of Meiteilon on Indo-Aryan language was short. It was hardly for about four decades. The contact of the two languages specially in the formative period is evident from the fact that some words are found in both the languages in obsolete forms. The word *marāl* is found in both Manipuri and Bengali in obsolete forms, however in the case of the former language it is still used in literature but not in spoken language. Another word *sagol* which in Meiteilon means 'horse', while in Bengali with variation of pronunciation means 'goat'. It is most probable that words like those mentioned in (A) Addressing nouns, are of this period. One important thing to be noted as stated above is that the languages under consideration are not modern languages. They are by now obsolete languages.

(L) Suffixes and prefixes :

Since Meiteilon is composite in nature, it has got a number of suffixes and prefixes, of which the decorative suffixes *mā*, *tā*, (*dā* frequently in modern pronunciation), *lā*, *bā*, and *iyā* or *yā* may be discussed. When the word *ma* is added to a word in a suffix form it simply becomes a decorative suffix similar to that

of the Tibeto-Burman suffix *ba*. In the word *hei-mā-i-pem* as discussed earlier the word *hai-mā* is an exclamation where *ma* is a decorative suffix and the root word is *hei* the same old Germanic word *hei*. The decorative nature of this suffix is clearly seen from the following sentences · *chatpibasū yai-mā* (You/we too may visit), *madumna setpibasū phei-mā* (If it is dressed like that, it too looks good), etc. In these sentences even if the suffix *ma* is removed the meanings do not appreciably change. Similarly we get words like *hainei-mā* (said so), *chānei-mā* (fitting), *phajei-mā* (nice), etc. The Tibeto-Burman suffix *ba* may also be added to those words in place of *ma* the result gives more or less the same meaning like *haineibā*, *chāneibā*, *phajebā*, etc. It may be noted that with the addition of these decorative suffixes *ma* or *ba*, it seems to give a little emphasis on the meaning of the word. Further this suffix *ma* may also be added to all nouns and verbs. Thus we get words like *pai-ma* (mind), *wang-ma* (beyond), *lai-ma* (much), *nām-ma* (single), *pot-ma* (pair), *tu-mā* (even number), *chali-ma* (going), *tumli-ma* (sleeping), etc. The suffix *ta* is also found in the words like *mai-tā* (facial appearance), *mon-dā* (mind), *khut-tā* (hand), *khon-dā* (manner of speech or voice) etc. Now the applications of *dā* the other form of *tā* and *tā* itself have become a grammar. The word *da* with a short and heavy tone is a case ending particle including its counterpart *ta*, for example, *mai-da* meaning 'on face', *khut-ta* meaning 'on hand' etc. As regards *la* it is almost dead by now, and *na* is frequently used in place of *ma*, for example, in the above sentences we can replace *ma* by *na* and we obtain *chatpibasū yai-na*, *madum-na setpibasū phei-na* etc. only a slight difference in the nature of emphasis, where, with the suffix *na* the sentences give certain subjective emphasis. The suffix *iyā* or *yā* may also be added to most of the nouns specially proper names and it is now dying out due to the pressure of the Tibeto-Burman suffix *ba* though at one time a very popular suffix, for example, Chongth miyā, Lourembiyā, etc. are now replaced by Chongthamba, Louremba, etc. respectively. Except *ba* the rest of the suffixes are of Sakiyan or Moriyān origins.

As regards prefix we get one prefix 'a' which is generally added to verbs to change to nouns and adjectives, e.g. a-ngāng (red), a-chūm (straight). a-hei (skill) etc. Hence it is an adjective suffix

Besides the above, the suffix *su* seems to be a Tibeto-Burman origin that has impact not only on Manipuri but also on other dialects of the Magadhi origin. The original meaning of this suffix is 'too' in the words like *ei-su* (I-too), *ma-su* (he-too), *chaba-su* (to eat too) etc. In some of the dialects of Magadhi origin we find the word *ka-su* from which the modern Hindi word *ku-sh* derived in a similar formation with the Manipuri word *koi-su* derived from *kari-su* (what too) with modern meaning 'something' usually associated with a negative.

The Burmese interrogative suffix *la* seems to have an impact on Meiteilon with a change in ound to the form *ra*, and the proto-Bangal suffix *ta* too with the modern sound *da*, but there is no concrete evidence. The modern Manipuri word *cha-qa-da-ba-ne* is derived from the earlier words *cha-la-ne* and *cha-ka-ta-ne* where *da* and *ta* are the same words. The modern inflectional particle *ki* is found to have been used as *ke* in early writings, for example, *i-rāt-ke-se*. In Bangal language *ki* and *ke* are words meaning respectively what and who.

The inflectional particle *tā* is also found in word forms in Manipuri, which is perhaps one of the words belonging to one of the dialects of the Himalayan Mongoloids. The root word *tā* meaning 'girl's girl friend' or 'woman's woman friend' is found to exist with a prefix pronoun in the possessive form, for example, *i-tā*, *na-tā*, and *ma-tā* meaning 'my-friend, your-friend, and his-friend' respectively where *i*, *na*, and *ma* are the possessive forms *ei* (I), *nang* (you) and *mahāk* (she) respectively.

It is therefore most probable that some of these inflectional particles were from the Burmans, classic Tibeto-Burmans, Bangals and proto-Bangals besides other Himalayan Mongoloids. In the Bangal language there were *Ngā* (Anga) elements which were also

one of the basic elements of Manipuri language. The Chinese, Tai and true Tibetan have very little or no inflectional particle. The mixing of the different dialects is the main cause of having a chain of inflectional particles in Manipuri language.

We have so far analysed a sampling of some basic words of the so-called Indo-Aryan origin. We also give room for possible errors, misinterpretations, chance of coincidence, subjective and objective judgements etc. and say fifty per cent of our findings are faulty. Even then the images of the modern Indo-Aryan languages are clearly seen.

We also can detect easily those Indo-Aryan words coming recently and not involved in the formation of the language, for example, *tarpan* (*tarpon*), *Shradha* (*Sorat*), etc. and more recently of the 20th century A.D. *Akashvani*, *Adhibesan* etc. These words particularly the latter two are generally felt something foreign to the speakers of Manipuri language but never so in those words which took part in the formation like *tāda*, *māma*, *khurā*, *pukhri* etc. which are the basic words of Manipuri language though they have link with that of modern Indo-Aryan languages. The grammar of Meiteilon is almost in parallel formation with that the Magadhi Pali. One distinct characteristic of Meiteilon is that the numerals are put after the article unlike other Indian languages e.g. *mee mar* meaning 'men four', but in most Indian languages the numerals come first.

The words *ei* and *i* (pronounced as *E*) are the same words in different forms, the former being nominative and the latter possessive cases, a distinct example of inflection without applying any inflectional particle. The above two words are respectively equivalent to the English *I* and *my* and the Sanskrit words *aham* and *mama*. Owing to the evolution of the language the word *i* is now found only in the prefix forms, and no independent existence is found, for example, *i-ma*, *i-pu* etc., the English equivalents are *my-mother*, *my-grandfather* etc. respectively. Even other words are also added to like *ei-gi i-ma*, *ei-gi i-pu* which gives the same meaning as above where the inflectional particle *gi* is a

possessive case ending, but there is more emphasis in the meaning. In some cases if *ei-gi* is added the word *i* is generally dropped, for example, in the *i-yum* meaning my-house if *ei-gi* is added, it generally assumes the form *ei-gi yum* removing the surplus word *i* which has the same meaning with *ei-gi* rather than *ei-gi i-yum* except at the time of emphasis. Thus the word *i* in the prefix form is generally confused with the main word and appears to be a single word which is perhaps the sequence of the impact of other dialects which do not exhibit inflections like that of the Chinese, Tai and true Tibetan which belong to the Sino-Tibetan family of languages. In Manipuri language the word *i* in prefix form is very common and most of the nouns may have this prefix.

The word *nang* meaning 'you' is changed its form when used in possessive form to *na* meaning 'your' usually in prefix form as above but it has no independent existence in the present context and when it is to stand alone the word assumes the form *nang-gi* with the addition of the inflectional particle *gi*, for example, *nang-gi yum*, *nanggi (i)mā* etc meaning 'your-house, your-mother' respectively are changed to the forms *na-yum*, *na-mā* etc. respectfully. Similarly most of the nouns may also be added with this prefix. In compounding the words *ei* and *nang* meaning I and you the form is changed to *ibingā* and the modern form is *ibāni*.

The pronouns *mā* and *māhāk* meaning 'it' and 'he' respectively are in current use but the pronoun *mā* is often changed into other forms, for example, *ma-nam*, *ma-mal* etc meaning respectively its-smell, its-price etc. The word *hak* of *ma-hak* means sometimes 'self' as shown in the word formations like *ei-hāk-ki*, *i-hāk-thak-tā*, *sanā-hāk-tak-ta* etc.

We may also cite another case, when a word like *leipāk* meaning 'land' or 'piece of earth' is used either in prefix or in suffix it changes its form to *lei*, for example, *leipāk-pan* meaning 'an earthen dam' and *leipāk-matum* meaning 'a lump of earth' are changed to *lei-pan* and *lei-tum* respectively, and *Hāo leipāk* meaning 'land of the Hao' and *Kanglā leipāk* meaning 'land of



Kanglā are changed to Hāorei and Kanglei respectively. But the modern meaning of leipan and hāorei are however slightly changed and now they mean 'an earthen walling to protect a homestead' and 'direction' respectively. Originally the Hāo tribes inhabited the south of the Poirei Mangāngs which they called Hāo-rei meaning the land of the Hāos and from its association the meaning of Hāorei had changed to the south direction and still it further changed to mean simply 'direction'.

It is seen from the above analysis that the root word in Manipuri language for mother is mā and for price is mal. As for mā it is a very common word for most of the languages but for mal it is found in the Sanskrit word *mulya*. It is therefore seen that the Sanskrit word *mulya* is derived from the root word *mal* by adding the suffix -ya.

As discussed in the previous sections, the word *i* of *i-rāt* or *i-lāt* seems to be the possessive form of the word *ei*, since we find words like *lam-lāt*, *machi-lāt*, *Kasha-lāt* etc. The root word for 'worship' or 'adorn' is therefore *rāt* or *lāt*. Besides the Vedic word *i-rāh*, we also find Vedic words like *i-late*, *i-lita* etc. which also connote the above meaning. But in the later Vedic this word *i* is found with confusion and seems to be one word along with the suffix part, and renders a meaning like 'me' or 'us'. In the R̥gveda several sentences with this word *i* are found of which we may quote a sentence, "Agne sukhamate ratha deva *i-lita* abah aahi hota manuhrtya", the Manipuri rendering is "Hey *i-lita* mei-O.. ..." meaning, "O fire, thou art adorned or worshipped by me or us.....". Hence there is a strong indication of the word *i* in the early Vedic language carries a meaning 'my' and has the same formation with the Manipuri word *i* which is also in confusion. Complementary to the above, we find another Vedic word *nā-h* meaning 'I' and the Manipuri word *na-hak* meaning 'you'. Again the English word *ai* meaning 'I' which also belongs to the Indo-European family of languages, has the same meaning and similar formations with the Manipuri word *ei*. In Middle

English the nominative form is *i* the same word formation with the Manipuri word *i*.

Besides 'mother' these words namely *ei* and *ai* are the most basic human words. Hence there is a strong indication that the words *ei*, *ai*, *i* etc. belonged to the dialect of an ancient race who dispersed from the Pamirs towards the Indian sub-continent and Europe, to which the Sakya and their cognate tribes belonged

Every word of the Manipuri vocabulary being composite in nature, is possible to disintegrate them into their respective origins. There is a very popular literary language, the phrase, *sābi ibema thanglen mānja pāmubi*, while addressing to a sweet heart by a boy and *sābi ibungo thanglen mānja pāmiba* by a girl to her sweet heart. Here the word *sābi* meaning youth but originally it meant *yābi* meaning girl is a Sakya-Nung formation like *i-sābi*, *i-sānou* etc. *ibema* is a modern pronunciation, the old pronunciation is *ipema* meaning 'my affectionate girl'. Again the word *ipema* may be split up into *i-pema* where *i* (pronounced as *E*) means 'my' and *pema* means 'affectionate girl'. Both *i* and *pema* are Sakya or Moriya formation which the Sanskrit transformed into the word *prema*. The modern connotation of the word is to mean something a girl with tender emotion, as for example a father or mother address his or her daughter with the word *ibema*. *Thanglen* is perhaps a Mayang word, that is, a Bodo-Tai formation where *thanglen* (*i-thang-len*) means 'my chief counterpart'. *Mānja* is a Mangang word, that is, Bodo-Anga formation which in the old pronunciation is *mān-clā* where *mān* is the *mān* of *i-mān* meaning matrimonial house or family and *chā* the Bodo word meaning child. *Pāmubi* seems to a Mangang formation with the feminine suffix *bi* and meaning is something precious. In the second phrase the word *ibungo* may be split up into *i-baung-ngo* which is probably a Burmanised Himalayan Mongoloid formation where *i* means my, *baung* is originally an addressing word to a boy with tender emotion and *ngo* a suffix for a superior.

Again the word *ma-rāl* meaning at present house or home, the original meaning his-house or his-home, has the root word *rāl*

or rān. Thus we get words like *i-rāl* or *i-rān*, *na-rāl* or *na-rān* meaning my-home or my-house, your-home or your-house respectively. The original root word *rāl* or *rān* seems to be a Nga (Anga) formation. This root word often carry another meaning like possession or wealth. In Manipuri language we find word formations like *na-yum mongba na-rān yai* simply meaning 'your-home' or 'your-house'. The word *yum* is earlier pronounced as *yim* in word like *ma-yim* meaning 'who dwells', and as stated earlier is a Chakkhan formation. The word *mongba* is a Tibeto-Burman formation of Tai origin and *na-rān* as stated above is a Nga formation. The last word *yai* is perhaps a Chakkha-Tai formation and connotes something like gem or something central essence as in *yai-bi* meaning, soul or life. With the word *yoi* we find other formations like *yoi-ma-yai* meaning sun. Again the word *yoi* gives a connotation like 'brightness that spreads far and wide' or something 'ever expanding' as found in the phrase like *yoi-bu yoi-hen talliba* which connotes something 'aiming a high glory'. Besides *yai* and *yoi* there is another word *yel* which also carry some abstract meanings.

In the phrase *malaya-noongsit-nāmba*, the word *malayā* is a Moriya word meaning breeze, the word *noongsit* is a Tibetan Khamba origin meaning wind and *nāmba* meaning gentle is probably a Himalayan Mongoloid formation with the Tibeto-Burman suffix *ba*. The meaning of the phrase is 'the gentle breeze'. The other word for wind is *mālang hoomoiba*. Here the word *mālang* is a Nga (Anga) formation with the root word *mala* of the word *malayā* where *yā* is a Moriya suffix and *hoomoiba* is a Tai formation with Tibeto-Burman suffix '-ba'. The word *mālang hoomoiba* is also used as the other name of Nongpok the supposed ancestor of the Nongbals.

British scholars classified the Manipuri language in the Tibeto-Burman language of the Kuki-Chin group. Although the mother tongue of this writer is Manipuri yet he finds a great difficulty in understanding the old and archaic language, and in several cases he is unable to understand the meaning. Not only the writer but

several pandits who devoted their lives in the study of the archaic language do not understand them fully as evident from the renderings of old passages into modern language. Let us quote an example, 'Yaorei leiyāthi khunkam leināmung-O' a passage from Ningthourol Lambuba. In this passage the word *khunkām* is simply rendered as 'village', but on further investigation with another word *Loushikām* as discussed earlier in conjunct with the historical background the word is found to have compounded by two words of the same meaning but having different etymologies namely *khun* and *kām* where both the words have the same meaning 'village'. Had there been a hyphen in between the two words in the manuscripts, the investigation would have been easier. The word *kām* is found in Pali of the Asokan period which later emerged as the Sanskrit word *grām*. Hence it is seen that *kām* is a Sakyan word and *khun* either a Tibeto-Burman or a neo-Tibetan word. The modern form for the word *leiyāthi* is *lei(h)-yā(ba)-thi(ba)* meaning 'search for a habitable land' and in the word *leināmung* (*lei-na mung*) the first word *lei* means 'to inhabit', *nā* means 'no' which also later emerged as Sanskrit word. As for the last word *mung*, it is supposed to be a Tai word meaning 'city'. Hence *lei-na-mung* means 'un-inhabitable city'. But the word *nā-mung* in modern context has a somewhat different meaning like 'incompatibility' say, when a ritual is being performed and no stranger is supposed to visit it, but it so happens that a stranger is found present then the ritual is said to have lost its value, which is called *nā-mung*. The suffix *O* is a case ending particle similar to that of the modern word *hai-na*. It is a very sad thing that the British scholars who had no knowledge of the language handled and gave a hasty decision on it. And the Indian scholars too tune to the findings of these British scholars. But those British officers and travellers who entered the Imphal valley and found an oasis of civilization in a vast area of barbarians, studied its people and their language to some extent, could not give their decision on them which remains unexplored till this date.

The reason for the British scholars who put the Manipuri language into the sub-family of Kuki-Chin of Tibeto-Burman, seems to be from the fact that there are common vocabularies between Manipuri and Kuki-Chin. The presence of common words does not indicate a common family. The counting words of modern Manipuri like *ama, aui, uhoom, ari, mang̃*, etc. are of Tibetan origin except *kan* (twenty) which seems to be of Austic origin. Most of the above stated scholars examined words of common objects like sun, moon, sky etc., limbs of the body like face, eye, and drew their decisions. They did not investigate the grammar or rather the words which would constitute the grammar. Most of the names of limbs of body in modern Manipuri are Tibeto-Burman origins. The word for the common object, sun is *numit* which is a Tibeto-Burman of Man origin. It may be noted that the word *numit* became popular in modern period due to the pressure of Tibeto-Burmans, but the earlier popular word for it is *yويمayāi*. With this background the above scholars hastily categorised the Manipuri language in Kuki-Chin of the Tibeto-Burman family. The family of a language is to be determined by the grammar but not by the common vocabularies or words. We may cite a living example here by the following sentence : (a) *Aapnā-gi khelā-di bhayangkar-ni*, and (b) *Adōm-er sānaba-to akiha-hoi*. In the first sentence 70% of the words or sounds are Bengali and 30% are Manipuri. This type of sentences are spoken by the Manipuris in Bengali infested areas of Cachar and Tripura. On the other hand the second sentence contains 70% Manipuri and 30% Bengali words or sounds, and such type of sentences are usually spoken by the Bengalis in Manipuri infested areas of Cachar. Yet the first sentence is Manipuri and the second one is a Bengali.

Again the Burmese language which is also categorised as a Tibeto-Burman had a strong impact of the Himalayan Mongoloid dialects even in root verbs too. We may cite an example as follows : *Thameng chābela*, meaning 'Do (you) eat rice', where the root verb *chā* is a Himalayan Mongoloid origin.

The classification of the Manipuri language in the group of Kuki-Chin of the Tibeto-Burman language family is much misleading and it is seen from the above analysis that it has relatively very little to do with the Kuki-Chin language. However Grierson in his linguistic Survey of India, Vol. III, part III, wrote, "The denomination Kuki-Chin is purely a conventional one, there being no proper name comprising these tribes. Meithei-Chin would have been a better appellation, as the whole group can be subdivided into two groups, the Meithei and the various tribes which are known to us under the names of Kuki and Chin. I have, however, to avoid confusion, retained the old terminology". He also further wrote, "Meithei is the chief language of the Manipur valley and has apparently a long and independent development".

According to some scholars the Tibeto-Burman language is a sub-family of Sino-Tibetan family of languages. Besides Tibeto-Burman, the other members of the family are the Tibetan, Chinese and Tai or Thai. Again some scholars say that the Chinese and Tai languages are the sole members of the Sino-Tibetan family of languages, while some others describe them to be Sino-Siamese or Sinitic in which the Athabaskan languages may also be included. Anyway the classification of the Sino-Tibetan family and its various sub-families, is still unresolved.

Certain characteristics of the Sino-Tibetan family of languages are that they have in common several features which show to a lesser or greater extent in the individual tongues. They show a general tendency to be monosyllabic and isolating. In most of the isolating languages the words do not change their forms or show inflections but they are tonal. Since relative absence of inflection, the key to expressing grammatical relationship is the word order. Very often two words of similar meanings are put together to give emphasis or to make the sense clearer. The putting of one word twice, for example, *mi-mi(na)*, *achā-machā(gi)* etc, in Manipuri language is perhaps an image of this family but with a different grammatical connotation. This type of formations cannot be regarded as the sole characteristic of Tibeto-Burmans, since such formations are not only found perhaps in the maximum in

the Malayasian languages but also to some extent in the Vedic and Indo-Aryan languages.

The Tibeto-Burman languages are likely to be tonal and may vary from two to six tones. They are less monosyllabic and isolating than that of the other members of the Sino-Tibetan family and in fact somewhat agglutinative as the Manipuri language does and exhibit some degree of inflection. In the old Manipuri words like *shingyel-leirāng*, *laija-ishing*, etc. meaning flower, water etc. respectively, two distinct linguistic elements, each of which exist separately and has the same meaning are joined to form words, is said to be a distinct characteristic of the Tibeto-Burman language family. The Tibetan language is also grouped under the Tibeto-Burman family. But the Tibetan language which was originally the Lhasa dialect is monosyllabic and isolating and has a relative absence of inflection. On the other-hand the Manipuri language exhibits a high degree inflection unlike other Tibeto-Burman languages as discussed earlier. The grammatical inflections and other inflectional particles of the Manipuri language are much similar to that of Pali and also to a great extent to that of modern Indo-Aryan languages and other dialects of Magadhi origins. No doubt there are words of Tibetan language particularly Kham-pa and other monosyllabic Tai origins in Manipuri language, but they do not alter the grammar. Words can be borrowed but not the grammar. Hence the Tibetan and Manipuri languages do not belong to the same family.

It may be noted that among the Tibeto-Burman dialects the ancient neo-Burmese tribes who later mixed with other tribes and became known as Old Kuki and hence New Kuki too may have some inflectional forms.

The case endings and other inflectional forms which constitute the body of grammar of the language are the fundamental differences between Manipuri and other Sino-Tibetan family of languages. The Manipuri language is therefore the youngest daughter of Tibeto-Burman and Mongolo-pre-Dravidoid (i. e. Indo- ) languages nourished in a family of Tibeto-Burman, to have

characterised by itself a branch or a sub-family of a language which is between the Sino-Tibetan and Indo-European families with a versatile capability of expressing thought and to have an independent development for a considerable length of time, and is to be categorised with a new nomenclature the 'Indo-Mongoloid' language.

Sounds of Meiteilon are mainly produced at the tip of the mouth by the movement of the lip and tip of the tongue. It has less nasal sounds and practically free from throat sounds. The only word *nga* has nasal sounds, and it does not have any throat sound like Arabic *k/a*. The early Meiteilon had only twentythree sounds. All the sounds of a word are made up of two to four tones, that is, the main vowel is accented in two to four tones namely (a) short-light tone, (b) short-heavy tone, (c) long-light tone and (d) long-heavy tone. So most of the words have two to four meanings. It may be noted that most of the words of Aryan origin do not change or alter their meanings by altering their tones. We give some examples of tones as follows :

	Meiteilon	English	Remarks
(a)	kam-ba (k-ə-r -hə)	less juicy	Where the first 'a' is in short-light tone as अ/अ in light tone.
(b)	kam-ba (k-ə-m-bə)	to kill	Where the first 'a' is in short-heavy tone as अ/अ in heavy tone.
(c)	kaamba (k-a-m-hə)	to blow	Where the first 'aa' is in long-light tone as आ/आ in light tone.
(d)	kaamba (k-a-m-bə)	to be untidy	Where the first 'aa' is in long-heavy tone as आ/आ in heavy tone.

In writing a word like *kamba* of Meiteilon by the Roman script shown above, it could have been any one of the above four words. It can only be differentiated by the context. Meiteilon is a tone language.<sup>8</sup>

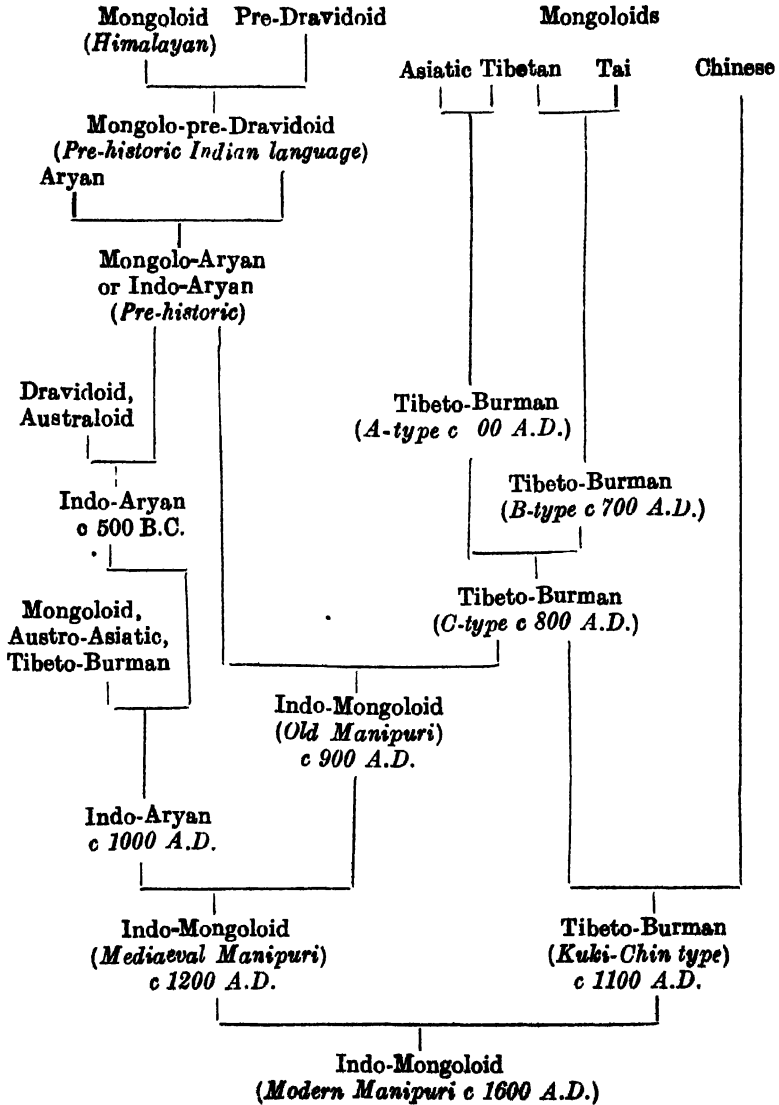
8. There are several Chinese languages which belong to the Sino-Tibetan or Sinitic family of languages, of which Mandarin spoken in Peking is the



The intonation of Meiteilon spoken in Imphal which is taken as the standard is a flat sound without much rise or fall, however those spoken in some southern parts of Imphal valley more particularly Waikhong, Wabgai, Wangoo, Kakching, Kakching-Khunou, Sagang, Itthai, Nachou, Ngaikhong, Ningthoukhong etc. are with rise and fall intonations somewhat similar to that of Vishnupriya speech intonations but more melodious. These intonations too vary from place to place and on the whole they are more melodious than that of the Imphal speech. Speakers of Imphal intonation call them *lon-khoi*(<sup>ba</sup>). It may be noted that the areas mentioned above were once inhabited by the people of Vishnupriya and other Tai origins. Even to this date very strong Vishnupriya elements are found in some of these areas. The pronunciation of the Kege-Moirangs on the whole though flat like that of the Imphal speech, differs slightly e. g. the Imphal pronunciation *nihān* meaning 'the day before yesterday' was pronounced as *nihan*. But the *lon-khoi* speakers usually try to speak the Imphal intonation when ever they speak to others other than their own group. Hence there is a tendency of dying out of these melodious intonations.

modern standard language which has also four tones, for example, the word *ta* in high tone means 'assist' or 'raise', in rising tone it means 'answer', in falling and rising tone it means 'strike' or 'do', and falling tone it means 'great'. Besides Mandarin the other prominent languages are (1) Wu, (2) Fukienese, (3) Cantonese, (4) Hakka and (5) Amoy-Swalow.

THE COMPONENTS OF  
MEITEILON OR MANIPURI LANGUAGE



## THE MEITEI SCRIPT

There is no evidence that the neo-Tibetan or Himalayan tribe Sakyas used any script even though there is no impossibility of their use of some scripts to write with. In the absence of concrete evidence it is presumed that they did bring neither the Khotanese script which was adopted in Tibet from about 700 A.D. brought from Khotan a kingdom situated to the north-east of Kashmir by king Strongtsan Gampo the founder of Lhasa kingdom, nor the Brahmi scripts which were perhaps used by the Sakyas during the Asokan period. These tribes neither developed a script of their own nor brought any other script of the Chinese origin. The Burmese language became a written language in the second half of the 11th century A.D. by introducing the scripts adopted by the Mons of Thaton which was brought from Canzevaram in south India in the 5th century A.D. In short the Burmese script of to-day is the script of South India used during the period of the Pallavas with some modifications. The earlier inhabitants of the northern Imphal valley like Chenglei, Shelloy-Langmai, Kouba, Kangba etc. who were Tibeto-Burmans were found to be in their primitive stages. Hence the question of script or any other form of writing does not arise. Similarly other Tibeto-Burmans or neo-Burmese tribes also did not bring script to write.

From about 1050 A.D. to 1200 A.D. fresh waves of other tribes of Austro-Asiatic and Tai origin like Funan, Maring, Nongbal, Heirem, Khunjan, Hao etc. migrated to this land. They all came from northern and eastern Burma of that period. It appears most of these tribes came without any script to write. By that period the Burmese script was current. If they had to bring any script at all it should have been the Burmese script. There is no evidence of Burmese script being adopted here.

There is no indication if Samlungfa the Pong prince who conquered the Poireis at about 1220 A.D. brought any script and

introduced here. It cannot be said assertively, but it appears the Buddhist Chakpas brought with them some form of writing. If they had brought at all it could not be other than the Indian scripts which the Pyus used to write their inscriptions. Some manuscripts give some vague references of the script of the Chakpas which cannot be authenticated properly.

When the Bangals, Proto-Bangals and Mayangs settled at Lamangdong by about 1225 A.D. or somewhat later some forms of modern Indian script perhaps appeared on the Imphal valley. The script was possibly the scripts adopted by the Senas of Bengal which were some modified forms of the Devanagari and the scripts used to write inscriptions by the Kalas in Pattikera principality. These scripts are perhaps the forerunners to the Bengali and Assamese scripts which are said to have developed from about the 13th century A.D. After the matrimonial alliances between the Lamangdong principality and Poirei principality, there is every reason to believe that the art of writing was also adopted by the Poireis.



We have seen some old records dealing in the events of the 10th and 11th century A.D. very minutely. The parentage, brothers and sisters of Pakhangba who lived in the latter part of the 10th century A.D. are found. Had the writing been adopted from the beginning of the 17th century A.D. only during the reign of Khagamba, it is very doubtful that there can be detailed account after the lapse of about 500 years. On the other hand if some forms of writing started from the early part of the 13th century A.D. there is possibility of giving accounts in details specially at times of peace and tranquility.

So it seems there is some justification that the writing with the modern Indian scripts started at about the first half of the 13th century A.D. It may be mentioned here that some of the revivalist groups specially the followers of Naoriya Phullo claimed a script to have been used by the Meiteis in early days. They circulated leaflets to the general public and the Meitei Mayek

Committee of 1973 A.D. as well, demanding the adoption of that script as Meitei script. The script appears to be a modification of Devanagari and also appears to have included some similar approved Meitei scripts along with some alphabets very similar to the Bengali script. Some scholars who examine the script feel that was an invention. There is room for doubt of adding some characters invented by them. They could not give proper evidence of that script being adopted in some periods or other. On the other hand the numerals appear to have been taken from different scripts of India. Finally that revivalist group dropped their demand. At the same time it is also doubtful that they would demand the adoption of their script totally under falsehood by befooling the mass. It appears that they had lost a link of some of the characters. There is no impossibility of some of the records written by scripts closely similar to that script could have been found somewhere else which was in the hands of some individuals who came to and settled in Cachar. As time passed on when the new Meitei script developed in the beginning of the 17th century A.D. and became popular, the earlier scripts became obsolete and hence they could not give a link. Any way they felt it was an old Meitei script.

For about a century following the period after the death of Khongtekcha there seems to be no proper culture in the art of writing in Poirei, however the Poirei king Irengba (c 1294-1310 A.D.) is described in Ningthourol Lambuba to be a scholar. How can Irengba be a scholar without knowing the art of writing, but the script he used to write with cannot be other than some form of Indian script.

As regards the Moriya city which the Poireis used to call Kege, there must have been some form of writing quite early from the time they landed on the valley now called Kabow valley in the 2nd century B.C., since they preserved the Indian astronomy, the Vedanga Jyotisha. Even the calendar which they developed earlier was modified by Moriya Phambalacha whose date has been estimated to about 1100 A.D. for which he is well known in the different accounts of Manipur. The Moriya city was the seat of

Indian *visa vis* Manipuri astronomy and astrology. The pursuit of knowledge in the field of astronomy, astrology and calendar cannot be accomplished without the art of writing. As the history of this city is shrouded with obscurity except some references here and there, we are not at the moment to give a comprehensive account of the character used in Moriya city. Since Moriya Phamballacha is supposed to have shifted his capital towards the southern part of Imphal valley at about the time when the Pagan king Anawrahta invaded Thaton in the year 1057 A.D., we cannot expect him to adopt the Pallava script of South India that was brought from Thaton by Anawrahta. Hence we can at the most guess that Moriya Phamballacha used the script brought by his ancestor the *Brahmi* script prevalent in the Asokan period. In the Brahmi alphabet or script word like Kunala and Jalauka were written like  and  respectively. We shall see the Manipuri script developed in the year 1616 A.D. which is claimed by some scholars to be indigenous have any image of this script in the latter part of this section, and if there be so, it is definitely certain that in Moriya city the Brahmi script was in use from about the 2nd century B.C.

There were scholars among the Brahmins who migrated in the latter part of the 15th century A.D. from different places of India, who brought with them different scripts which they used earlier while they were in their countries. The Brahmins who migrated from Nadia and Sylhet brought with them possibly Bengali scripts, while those who migrated from Gujarat, Kanpur and Nepal brought some scripts similar to that of Devanagari. Most of these scholars used to write accounts and literature in their own ways by their respective scripts. Thus there were books written by different scripts in the 16th century A.D. Possibly this way of practice created a chaos among the scholars and the general public as well. The confusion led to the invention of an altogether new script, when there was unification of the Manipuris under the hegemony of the Poirei kings.

Most of the earlier books written by different scripts used to be kept by the scholars before some of them particularly Tantric literature, books dealing with racial origin and Saktism were burnt by Pamheiba on the instigation or advice of Shantidas Gosai. Those books which did not contain spurious elements were kept in tact. Again most of the remaining books were scattered and lost during the Burmese invasion. It has been discussed in earlier sections that even the present copy of the printed Cheitharol Kumbaba was rewritten during the period of Gambhir Singh after the Burmese war. In spite of it some books were recovered from Burma. These are perhaps the reason why we are getting so many characters in the old manuscripts. When all the characters found in the old manuscripts are put together they may exceed some hundreds.

Even when the new Meitei script was adopted, some scholars inserted earlier scripts in their writing. Despite the presence of different characters, some bad handwritings also gave gradual change in the pattern of the script.

The use of certain scripts in the 15th century A.D. is also evident from the fact that the Poirei king Kiyamba started maintaining chronicle from the year 1485 A.D. How can a chronicle recording day to day events be maintained in the absence of the art of writing, there must have been some scripts other than the one developed in the year 1616 A.D. by Khagamba. Since Kiyamba learnt the art of maintaining chronicles from the Pongs there is every reason to believe that it must have certain image of the scripts of Pong or Burmese besides the other Indian scripts. Again almost all the scripts of South East Asia are of Indian origin brought by the Buddhist missionaries. The Burmese script as mentioned above are direct modifications of South Indian script. We are very unfortunate that the original chronicle of Kiyamba is lost. The characters so far found in the different manuscripts are numerous but none of them show resemblances with the South East Asia scripts. Hence the script used during the period of Kiyamba seems to be some modified script of Brahmi and Devanagari.

In the year 1616 A. D. king Khagemba introduced a new script altogether different from those earlier scripts used by different scholars. It was called 'Meitei Mayek'. Thus a uniformity in scripts had been maintained and many people were taught the new script and several books had been produced in that very year.

There is a fabulous saying or belief that sometime during the period of Khagemba one scholar named Magha Pandit meditated for five days on the Nongmaijing hill for the development of the Meitei character. The goddess of learning was pleased and gave him one pen on his right hand and one inkpot on his left hand to write. Thus he developed the Meitei script. As stated above, historical records also say that in the year 1616 A.D. Khagemba introduced the script.

For the time being let us take Magha Pandit invented the Meitei script. It is certain that Magha Pandit had firm conviction on the formation of different signs of script that were available at his disposal. He had definitely seen the scripts of Brahmi, Devanagari, Burmese, Bengali and Assamese but certainly not Roman, Greek, Arabic, Chinese and Japanese. Therefore the alphabets developed by Magha Pandit should have the image of the first set of scripts but definitely not the second set. Let us put all sets of alphabets of the above mentioned scripts together with the Meitei alphabets and see which family of scripts do the Meitei scripts fall. Even an amateur in the field of scripts will at once say that the Meitei scripts belong to the family of the Indian scripts and will never say they belong to the Roman, or Arabic, or Chinese family. Moreover some characters are the direct modifications of Brahmi, Devanagari and South Indian scripts.

About the nature and life of the Meitei script different scholars give different views : Mr. Grierson, Dr. R. Brown and Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterjee say that the Meitei script is a modification of the Indian scripts. Mr Damat says that the Meitei script was borrowed from Bengali during the reign of Charairongba at about 1700 A.D. and Mr. Hudson says that the Meitei script was borrowed



from the Chinese at about 1540 A.D. which seem to have no foundation at all. Dr. Kalidas Nag says that the Meitei script is a pre-Asokan script. Here Dr. Nag feels it as old as 600 B.C. As stated earlier the loss of history has brought these unhappy decisions which are poles apart. We are not to blame them. Since the Meitei scripts belonged to the family of Indian scripts there is every reason to believe as they said and at the same time our forged date claims the existence of this kingdom in Imphal valley from the period before Christ.

From about the latter part of the 19th century A.D. modern Assamese and Bengali scripts began to replace slowly owing to the influence of British relations and absence of foundry and printing press in Meitei scripts. By about the early part of the 20th century A.D. the Bengali script totally replaced the Meitei script. All common people began to learn the Bengali scripts while the Meitei scripts were studied by the royal pandits and those who were interested in that field.

In addition to the alphabets there is one letter or rather a symbol called *anji* in the form S, that is, a Roman letter s, sometimes with the shape of a crescent moon and a dot over it. Most of the original *puyas* so far collected begin the text with this symbol *anji*. Even *puyas* dealing with the alphabets also start with this symbol, but the meaning of this symbol is not found in any of the texts. In olden days people used to learn the alphabets, first by uttering *anji* and then followed by other alphabets. Hence they read the alphabets in the manner *anji, ka, kha*, etc. at least in the early Chandrakirti period as narrated to this writer in his childhood by octogenarians who were alive in the early 1930s. He was further told that they also used to read the alphabets like *kikoma-da kiyo, khikoma-da kiyo* etc. which were not well understood to him what letters or actions were referred to by these expressions. While learning the alphabets people used to learn also with a pointed stick as pen on a piece of plank sprayed or smeared with fine dust as slate called *khorjei* and *khorpak* respectively. But in no case the mode of reading the alphabets as *kok, sam, mit, lai* etc. as approved by the authority in 1982 A.D. is found.

It may not be far too wrong to presume that the words *kikoma* and *khikoma* were the modes of reading the first two letters of the script (now represented by *kok* and *khov* of the approved mode of reading) corresponding to the Devanagari *ka* and *kha* since the suffix *ma* of the above words is Moriya or Sakiyan origin as discussed in the section on Meiteilon or Manipuri language. Hence it is most probable that the way of reading the signs of the Brahmi scripts in the post-Asokan period if not the Asokan period were *kikoma*, *khikoma* etc.

As regards the etymology of the word *anji* and its symbol, it is a distinct Saivite origin as in several inscriptions found elsewhere in India with the symbol *anji* for the adoration of Lord Siva. Even in Assam too the symbol *anji* is found in different inscriptions. Again in the Indian *puranas* this symbol which is to be read as *anji* is found to have been mentioned, and "according to Bhattacharya, this sign is the form of snake-shaped *kulakundalini* that resides in *susumna*. This *kulakundalini* is the Sakti of Siva that remains coiling round *sayambhu* (self-begotten) *linga* at *mula-dhara* (the lower nervous system of Indian anatomy)"<sup>1</sup>

It is therefore seen that *anji* is not an indigenous development as commonly supposed.

The character symbols of the Manipuri script are mainly represented by combination in various forms of pieces of straight lines with relatively less presence of curves unlike the Assamese, Bengali and Devanagiri scripts. Its immediate origin may be attributed to the Brahmi script. The same character symbols E, Y, and C of the Brahmi are found in the Manipuri script with the addition of upper limbs or bars in the latter two cases like Y and C respectively. The Manipuri character symbol W is also a modification of the Brahmi W with the addition of a vertical line. Four letters namely W, E, W and W are found with bottom bars which are

1. Bhattacharya: Mahadeva, the Istadeva, of the kings of Kamarupa, J A.R S. II, page 1--6; see also B.K. Barua: A Cultural History of Assam, page-163.

not the characteristics of the Devanagari and they are the characteristics of the South Indian scripts specially the Kanarese script. The letter ꯀ is a direct modification of the Devanagari ऋ and hence a latter addition. The earlier sound is only ka which stood for both ka and ga.

It is now clearly seen that the Manipuri script is a combination of modified Brahmi scripts with indigenous components. In the earliest Manipuri script there were only 18 letters but the scholars of the latter period had added more letters to co-opt more sounds which seem to be some modifications of the Devanagari and Pallava letters. Even the old coins bore the legends in Devanagari. There seems to be practically no impact of Bengali script as it came late. Since it is the latest development among the Indian scripts, it is more scientific, and since most of the letters are formed by combination of pieces of straight lines each letter can be represented by systematic pieces of straight lines on a square graph facilitating electronic displays on screens without much distortions. One inherent defect of the Manipuri script as the Devanagari, Assamese, Bengali etc. do, is the inconvenience to cursive writing. All the attachments of vowels in attachment forms come to the right side of the consonent besides the upper and lower attachments, unlike ळ (ikār) of the Assamese, Bengali and Devanagari which comes to the left of the consonent.

The Manipuri letters unlike the Devanagari, Assamese and Bengali scripts show changes of shape or inflection like the letter ꯁ (ma) is changed to ꯂ in the ending form, for example, in the words ꯁꯁ (mama) and ꯁꯂ (mam) where the latter word shows inflections, but in the letter of the above scripts a symbol '̣' called *hasanta* is added to the letter. Seven letters of the Manipuri script are found to have assumed the change of forms or inflections. Again it does not have compound letters like the Indian scripts mentioned above.

The Mauryan or Sakiyan dialect was a written language when they arrived and established the city in the *tampuk* now called the Kabow-tampak or Kabow valley with the Brahmi script from

about the 2nd century B.C. and the Manipuri language which gave its birth about the 9th century A.D. became definitely a written language from about the 12th century A.D. with some forms of scripts of Indian origin at least in the Kege principality.

The official Manipuri alphabets with the pattern of sounds in Roman script are given below :

𑜀𑜃𑜫	𑜇	𑜄	𑜈
kok ( <i>ka</i> )	sam ( <i>sha</i> )	lai ( <i>la</i> )	mit ( <i>ma</i> )
𑜀𑜂𑜫	𑜆	𑜃	𑜇
pā ( <i>pa</i> )	nā ( <i>na</i> )	chil ( <i>cha</i> )	til ( <i>ta</i> )
𑜆	𑜇	𑜄	𑜃
khou ( <i>kha</i> )	ngou ( <i>nga</i> )	thou ( <i>tha</i> )	wai ( <i>wa</i> )
𑜃	𑜄	𑜈	𑜄
yāng ( <i>ya</i> )	huk ( <i>hu</i> )	ool ( <i>oo</i> )	i ( <i>è</i> )
𑜆	𑜇	𑜃	𑜃
pham ( <i>pha</i> )	atiya ( <i>a</i> )	gok ( <i>ga</i> )	jham ( <i>pha</i> )
𑜃	𑜄	𑜄	𑜃
rai ( <i>ra</i> )	bā ( <i>ba</i> )	jil ( <i>ja</i> )	dil ( <i>da</i> )
𑜄	𑜄	𑜃	
ghou ( <i>gha</i> )	dhou ( <i>dha</i> )	bloum ( <i>bh</i> )	

Lonsum the inflectional form

𑜀𑜃𑜫	𑜆	𑜄	𑜇
kok lonsum	mit lonsum	nā lonsum	ngou lonsum
𑜃	𑜃	𑜄	𑜄
lai lonsum	pā lonsum	til lonsum	i-lonsum

Cheitap : nap and tap

𑜃	𑜄	𑜄	𑜃
á-atap	ei-cheinap	e-yetnap	ee-inap/ènap
𑜃	𑜄	𑜄	𑜃
o-otnap	ou souap	u/oo-unap	ng-nungnap



Even in the alphabet book prepared by the Directorate of Education with approved letters as a text book this letter is shown with the upper limb in the very cover page and the boldest letter inside the book and the rest are without limbs. Hence it is not known what the approved letter was. Again the letter ool (oo) of the foundry product is shown as  $\infty$  in pica but in 16 point it is shown with the addition of a loop on the curve proceeding from the upper bar.

With the wave of revivalist movement emotionally charged with Meitei sentiments, most revivalists moved for the replacement of the Bengali scripts by the Meitei scripts. There are arguments for and against the different scripts claimed to be the Meitei scripts by the different revivalists among themselves. The chaos lasted for more than two decades. Finally the government of Manipur set up a commission to examine an officially recognizable Meitei script in the year 1973 A.D. known as Meitei Mayek Advisory Committee. The commission included different representatives and scholars. At last after much deliberations the commission came to a unanimous decision and submitted their recommendations to the government. The government of Manipur accepted the recommendations of the commission and declared that the recommended script was the official Meitei script. The government also announced its decision that the script be taught in schools from the academic session 1982-83 A.D. Thus the selfless labour and sacrifice of the revivalists the Meitei Mayek comes to its life again. Some of them moved for the foundry of the Meitei scripts and raised funds by donations etc. They had produced for the first time the manufactured foundry product in 1982 A.D.

## THE PRE-ARYAN MONGOLOIDS AND THEIR CULTURE

So long we had been looking at things from the other end of the telescope. There was an empire of Mongoloid race and civilization in the northern part of the Indian sub-continent before the coming of the Aryans. We have no accounts of these Mongoloid kingdoms perhaps that flourished before the Aryans. The only evidence of non-Aryan civilization of the pre-Aryan period is the findings of Mohenjodaro and Harappa in the Punjab plains which are estimated to be of about 1500 B.C. Some scholars put the date much earlier. This civilization is to this date taken as Dravidian civilization. It is only from Aryan accounts either legendary or mythology we get a glean idea of the pre-Aryan Mongoloids. Racially, culturally and linguistically they fused together to what was known as Vedic people or Mongolo-Aryans. Mongolo-Aryan dialect was perhaps the mother of Pali from which Sanskrit developed. Sanskrit was never a spoken language of the common people except some courtiers who boasted for their scholarship probably talked in Sanskrit while in court like English for common people during the British period. It is certainly wrong to think all vocabularies of Sanskrit to be of Aryan origin. It may be pointed out that the word *sringavera* meaning 'ginger' that has hitherto been taken as a root Sanskrit word is now found by recent researches to be of Austro-Asiatic origin. So also it is unimaginable that the dialects of the tribes to which Gautama Buddha belonged, to which Emperor Asoka was born, to which the cult of Siva was developed could have been null. The dialects of these Himalayan tribes must have impact on the formation of Sanskrit language.

These Himalayan tribes moved towards the south along the courses of rivers and settled on the foothills and adjoining plains

of northern India possibly in the second millennium B.C. from their habitat in the Himalayan plateau. They developed several kingdoms in the Upper Gangetic plains. They began to move as far as Kabul, Kandahar etc. to the west. As time passed on they began to mix possibly with the pre-Dravidoids who either came from the Deccan or who were earlier settlers in the Punjab plains. A mixed layer of pre-Dravido-Mongoloid began to form in these farther southern regions of their new habitation. Then came a wave of new arrivals from west who were known as Aryans. The ancestral home of the primitive Aryans is believed to be the region of Austria-Hungary. The Aryans were more tolerant than the Mongoloids. The Aryans not only amalgamated them but also brought others into their fold which was known as Aryanisation. All the Mongoloid princes were given the status of Kshatriyas in course of Aryanisation. The course of Aryanisation which started from the Punjab plains moved towards the east mainly along the Gangetic plains. In about the middle of the first millennium B.C. the wave was in the Bihar plains. The Mongoloids probably opposed the wave but soon they were Aryanised. The birth of Buddhism and Jainism is perhaps an example of opposition of the Arya Dharma. Practically none of the Aryans accepted Buddhism being a religion founded by the Mongoloids but it had its field in the Mongoloid world. Gautama Buddha was an Aryanised Mongoloid, so too Emperor Asoka. These Himalayan tribes began to move to the east in Burma and established kingdoms there. It is likely that Pusyavarman who founded a kingdom at Kamarupa in Assam at about 400 A.D. was a Himalayan tribe most probably Chakkha or Sakya. It may not be far wrong to presume the Saikiya families of the Assamese were of Sakiyan origin and Koli-tas of the Assamese too were of Himalayan Mongoloid origin.

It may be mentioned that several theories about the origin of the Koli-tas of the Assamese have been suggested by different scholars. Dalton thinks they were the earliest colonists of Assam, Hoggson feels they were Koch, Waddel says they were the descendants of the Indian Kayasthas, B.K. Barua states there were early



settlements of *Kali-tas* near *Sodia* in Upper Assam and further associates them with *Kabalika* of the *Vishnu Puranas* whose original home was south. *S.C. Goswami* refers to them a class of people called *Koluta*, *Kuluta* or *Kolta* of a country called *Kuluta*. According to the *Puranus* the *Kolutas* were found inhabited the foothills of the *Himalayas* and some of them were known as *Vratya Kshetriyas*. The *Aryans* usually conferred the *Kshetriya grade* in the four tier system of the *Aryanism* on the *Mongoloid* princes and their tribes when they got merged to the fold of *Aryanhood*. Several scholars believe the *Kalitas* to be *Aryan* origin.

The name *Kali-ta* has a parallel formation with *Kali-nga*, and 'ta' of *Kali-ta* is a decorative suffix. The *Kali-ngas* (*Kali-Ngas*) were not of *Aryan* origin, they were of *Himalayan Mongoloid* origin who later became *Aryanised*. *Kali-ta* and *Kali-nga* seem to have belonged to more or less one tribe. In the case of *Kali-nga* the *nga* in suffix form is the name of another *Himalayan* tribe. They are usually found to have been mentioned with the suffix '-nu' like *Nga-nu*. It shows that *Kali* is also a tribe who belonged to the *Himalayan Mongoloid*. Thus *Kalinga* is an amalgamated tribe of *Kali* and *Nga*. In *Buddhist* literature a tribe named *Koliya* is found to have been mentioned, "The association of *Kalitas* with the *Kolutas*, as with the *Buddhist Koliyas*, appears almost certain, but this does not determine the racial origin of the former, except their doubtful *Kshetriya* connection".<sup>1</sup> In *Koliya* the '-ya' is a suffix. It is therefore certain that *Koli* or *Kali* is the original name of a *Mongoloid* tribe.

The *Kalitas* entered *Assam* most probably from the west and not much earlier than the 11th century A.D. They were possibly the forerunner of the *Assamese* language in *Assam*. The earlier home of the *Kalitas* prior to their entry into *Assam* should have been the area comprising some south-western *Bihar* which is the

1. *The History of Civilization of the people of Assam to the 12th century A.D.*: P.C. Choudhury, page-110.

area of characterisation of this group of Indo-Aryan vernaculars. This group of language began to develop in about the 10th century A.D

The Himalayan tribes who moved to the west got mixed with the tribes coming from the west while those who moved to the east got mixed with the eastern Mongoloids. These Himalayan tribes were tall, fair complexioned and bracycephalic statured Mongoloids. Their habitat before coming to the Indian plains seems to be the highland river valleys of the Tsangpo river from Manoswarabara to Sakya Gumpa in southern Tibet. Their ancestral home is a matter of speculations only. They are supposed to have come from the Pamirs and north of it. Some of them moved towards the south while the others moved towards the west.

We have so far discussed in earlier sections that the home of the Sakyas before their entry into the Indian mainland was at Sakya Gumpa in Tibet. We may discuss a little more of their probable primeval or aboriginal home before they were found in Sakya Gumpa. As stated above the primeval home of the Sakyas seems to be at some eastern parts of the Pamir from where the different clans of a tribe moved in different directions. They were perhaps some of the clans of a tribe to which the Yueh-chi tribe belonged and perhaps were the first who left their primeval home long before Christ and moved southwards to present Tibet, and seems to have settled in the southern parts of Tibet long before the arrival of the tribes from central China who would later become Tibetans. In certain accounted part of the history of this race, the Saiwangs (Sakas) moved towards the west from their primeval home and settled somewhere to the south-east of Bactria where they had contact with the Bactrian Greeks in the closing part of B.C. Then followed another wave of Kuei-shung (Kanakas) in the same direction. Both these two tribes arrived in India in the early part of the Christian era. But the history of the western stream which moved towards the European continent by the time when the Sakyas moved towards the south is not traceable. It seems

this early western stream got mixed with the earlier inhabitants of the European region like the Alpine races, High German, Norse etc. which is evident from the similarity of their old and obsolete language to that of the Manipuri language.

Because of the similarities of certain aspects of culture and language of the Alpine race with that of the Sakyas that manifested in the north-Eastern sub-Himalayan regions of India, some scholars firmly believe that an Alpine race came to Assam. In fact it is a particular tribe or race that distributes the culture and language to the Alpine zone as well as to the North-Eastern sub-Himalayan zone. This group of people was neither a Caucasoid nor a Chinese Mongoloid but they were in between them and anthropologically were Mongoloids. There can be no doubt that this group of people to which the Sakyas and the European streams belonged were worshippers of Siva and hence the place of origin of the Siva worship is the eastern region of the Pamirs. Those who moved towards northern India and the Himalayan regions preserved the culture whereas those who moved towards the European region their culture was either molested or discarded as a result of mixing with the earlier inhabitants.

This group of Mongoloids who occupied southern Tibet gradually pushed their way into the Indian mainland bordering the Himalayan foothill from Assam to Himachal Pradesh. It is the language of this group of Mongoloids that became a common base stratum of the European and Indian languages. As the name of this Mongoloid race is not known, it has been conventionally put in the prefix form 'Indo-' of the language like Indo-Aryan, Indo-European, Indo-Australoids etc. It is this branch of the Mongoloid race that has been referred to as the Himalayan Mongoloid in this book.

This is the rough political sketch of the pre-historic Himalayan tribes. We must be able to find something of them all along the southern Himalayas from the west of the Punjab to the north-east of Burma. As place names supposed to have been

associated with these Himalayan tribes, in Kabul on the northern bank of the Kabul river near Jallalabad there was a place called *Lampak* or *Lambak*. The modern name of it is however said to be Lamghan (Lamkhan) In Manipur account Ningthourol Lambuba, it is mentioned that a place called Chakkha Namkhan (Sakya Namkhan) in the eastern hills inhabited by the Marings. Chakkhan Namkhan was subdued by the Poirei king Thangbi Lanthaba (c 1381-1391 A.D) for which he was conferred the title *Nongpok Chakkha Khongjomba*. The account further mentions though implicitly the naming of the hill Chakkha Namkhan to have associated with the visit of Chakkha Yabiroka the mother of Pakhangba while she was searching for a better habitable place.

There were two sets of Aryanised Mongoloids. Those who continued to stay in the Aryanised zones resembled altogether another stock than those who migrated to the Mongoloid zones, both racially and linguistically. Those who are within the Mongoloid world seem to possess some of the basic words of their dialects with them while those in the Aryanised world appear to have lost it. Racially too, as stated earlier, those in the Aryanised zones got more and more non-Mongoloid strains while those in the Mongoloid world became predominantly Mongoloid. Thus it seems the tall, fair-complexioned and bracycephalic Indo-Aryans inhabiting northern India or so, may have some common elements with that of the Ao Nagas inhabiting Nagaland. The Ao Nagas appear to be less molested racially since their departure from their homeland.

The Kabow valley was divided into three political units. They were Samjouk (Thangdaut), Khampat (Khambat) and Kale. Samjouk was the northernmost limit while Kale was the southernmost limit which comprised the Kabow valley proper. The name Khampat was originally given by the Moriyas who belonged to a Himalayan Mongoloid origin. It may be mentioned here that Kham means gold in the dialect of Senbi besides the Tibetan tribe Kham. In Gujerat, the Punjab

and Rann of Kutch area a few places like Lakhat, Kham-pat (Khambhat), Panipat etc. are found. The suffix '-pat' used in the above cases appears to have some specific meanings. It is not known what would have been the original meaning of pat here. In Manipuri language pat with a long 'a' sound means lake or some-time marshy places. It may be mentioned here that there are so many place names with the suffix pat in Imphal valley like Khonghampat, Porompat, Nityaipat, Keisampat, Lamphelpat etc. indicating marshy areas, were given to those areas which is now totally dried up areas. The areas of Lamphelpat and Porompat dried up only during the last 4 or 5 decades. Ningthourol Lambuba mentioned a place called Khampat on the northern parts of Imphal valley possibly in the upper Inl valley which is now no more found. The Rann of Kutch area was also a marshy land. It is very likely that some two or three thousand years back there were several lakes which are by now getting dried up and became a marshy land. In the Punjab too the areas of Panipat seems to be somewhat low than the surrounding areas. In these cases the word pat may have the same application. The similarities of place names suggest that these areas were once occupied by people having more or less the same speech. It is therefore most likely that the Himalayan Mongoloids inhabited the areas before they were completely amalgamated with the Aryans and other tribes.

In the above mentioned place, that is, Lampak an edict believed to be of Asoka was found. The name clearly suggests a word of the Mongoloid origin. In Manipuri language this word is found to be current even to this date. In the above word 'Lam' means land and 'pak' or 'bak' means flat and broad. Thus Lampak or Lambak means lawn or meadow. Lamghan or Lamkhan has a very slight different meaning something like a banging valley.

The kingdom names like Anga, Banga, Kalinga etc. as discussed in earlier sections are of Mongloid origin. The Aryans could not pronounce the word Nga except in the suffix form. They pronounced it as Anga. Thus it is seen that the names

of the above kingdoms could have been Nga, Panga, and KalNga. In the Mongoloid zones there are plenty of such names of Himalayan origin.

Siva worship is supposed till this date to be of Dravidian origin. However, it may not be wrong to suppose it to be of Himalayan Mongoloid origin. It is also curious to note some common words are found in Dravidian and Manipuri languages, for example, *manam* meaning 'smell', *ishoi* meaning 'song' or 'music', *lam* meaning 'land' etc and a phrase, say, *rimana tala lam* meaning 'aircraft-landing-place' i.e. airfield. The first word the above phrase *riman* is probably an Aryan origin and in Manipuri it is a recently borrowed word, the suffix '-na' and the remaining word, *taba* and *lam* are all basic Manipuri words. This phrase *rimana tala lam* is found in Malayalam having the same meaning. Malayalam is said to be the youngest daughter of Tamil. The word *jalli* in suffix form like Mawapalli, Khagempalli, Ayangpalli etc are also found in the Dravidian dialects. We know that modern Manipuri language is a composite language formed by the different dialects mainly of Mongoloid origins. The findings of common words in the Dravidian languages and Manipuri language strongly indicate that at one time or the other a constituent of the Meitei people and the Dravidian people had social contacts or groups of people having a common dialect with that constituent had contact with the Dravidian people. So far in the accounted history of the Dravidians or of the Meiteis there is no indication of it and the present geographical locations also do not support it. So if they had social intercourse at all it must have been in pre-historic days. There are two hypotheses of the earlier habitation of the Dravidians. One is that the Dravidians first settled in the Punjab plains before the advent of the Aryans. When the Aryans came they were gradually pushed towards the south. The other is that the ancestral home of the Dravidians was in the Deccan plateau, from where they moved north-west as far as Kabul and Afghanistan. The second hypothesis appears to base mainly on geological life of the Deccan and the Gangetic plains.

Indian history so far investigates the pre-historic Dravidian settlements and their civilization but fails to investigate the culture of the Himalayan Mongoloids who had definitely kingdoms all along the foothills of the southern Himalayas and their adjoining plains from Kabul to lower Assam. In the Punjab and its adjoining areas the Himalayan Mongoloids probably occupied the northern portions while the Dravians occupied the southern portions in pre-historic days and they had social contacts. The earliest worship of the Dravidians is said to be the earth as the Mother goddess. The male god found in the excavation of Mohenjodaro and Harappa is 'seemingly' identified with Siva and the black stone found at Harappa site resembled 'Sivalinga'. Thus it is said that Saivism is the oldest living faith in the world.

The supposed original names Si-ba in Sanskritised form Siva, and Te-bi in Sanskritised form Devi do not suggest to be of Dravidian origin. The suffixes '-bi' and '-bi' are purely Mongoloid suffixes in meaning masculine and feminine respectively. The abode of Siva is said to be at Kailash near the Manasarovar lake on the northern Himalayas. It is quite likely that the abode of a god conceived by a tribe must have been some lofty places near their habitation which is very tempting but hard to reach. The tribe who conceived Siva must have been a tribe near Kailash. The name Kailash may be disintegrated into Kci-la-sha in the Mongoloid formation which gives some positive meaning. So far available records do not indicate the presence of Dravidians in the northern Himalayas. Moreover the hypothesis that the ancestral home of the Dravidians was in the Deccan plateau also does not support it. It is therefore seen that Siva was a god of the Mongoloids who had social contact with the Dravidians in the Punjab plains in pre-historic days.

In addition to the above analysis some words found common in both the Dravidians and Mongoloids as stated above are found to be of Mongoloid origin. The word *lam* is clearly a Mongoloid origin. In most of the Himalayan Mongoloids the word is found

either as *lam* or *ram*. With a little variation in the Tibetan language 'road' is called *lam* and in Manipuri it is *lam-bi*. The word *ishes* (*she*) is called in the Tibetan language is *shay*. In old Manipuri too the word is *shay*.

About the Mongoloid god Siva and his dance *Tandava*, we have investigated in earlier sections. When Siva was brought into the fold of the Aryan culture, he was given several other names like Sankar, Mahadeva, Maheswar etc. He became included in the Aryan pantheon as one of the triads: Brahma the Creator, Vishnu the Preserver and Maheswar the destroyer. The function of Maheswar is to destroy which must have some applications or association with the earlier concept. The meaning of Siva is death in Manipuri however the modern form is A-siva. As discussed in previous sections *Tantaba* means 'synchronic rhythms' in dance and music in living Manipuri language. This indicates the birth of dance is *Tantaba*. The present Indo-Aryan word *tal* is derived from *tan* of *tantaba*.

Besides the above samplings, some root verbs given in the section Meiteilon or Manipuri language are Indo-Aryans from the Indo-Aryans point of view or from the conventional belief. But that set of root verbs may not at any rate be wrong to say that they are of Mongoloid origin used in Sanskrit. Thus it is seen that the racial and cultural elements of the early Mongoloid kingdoms along with their languages became mixed with that of the Aryans the new immigrants and emerged the so-called Mongolo-Aryans and later Indo-Aryans and the Pali languages. Hence it is seen that a sizable bulk of Mongoloid vocabularies are in Sanskrit.

The Himalayan tribes practiced both polyandry and polygamy while the Aryans practiced only polygamy. The Pandavas practiced polyandry by marrying Draupadi as their common wife. So a doubt is arisen whether the Pandavas were real Aryans or some other Aryanised Mongoloid prince, The Aryans took polyandry a great sin and most Hindu accounts mention the



**Pandavas as Aryan princes** It is mentioned in the mythology when Jamadagni was deserted by his wife Renuka, possibly co-habited with other husbands, he became restless and commanded his son Parsurama to kil his mother. Relying on the text of the Mahabharata, the Pandavas were the great grandsons of Parasar Muni the Aryan but in no way had blood relation with their great-grand father Shanta-nu. Pandu, the father of Pandavas was conceived in the womb of Ambalika, the widow of prince Vichitra-birja by the sperm of Vyasa the son of Parasar Muni. Again Kunti and Madri gave birth to the five Pandavas by the sperms of other Aryans but not by the sperms of Pandu who had a disease which forbade the co-habitation with a wife. The mythology however gives the account in a fabulous way. It is a process of Aryanisation by blood. Then, was Shanta-nu, a non-Aryan prince? Or, did the non-Aryan practice penetrate into the Aryan society? A long chain of ancestors of Shanta nu as found in the text describes them to be the Aryans but the Himalayan suffix '-nu' as found in Shanta-nu is very common both for the Himalayan tribes as well as the supposed Aryan tribes. Besides Shanta-nu we get names like Bha-nu, Re-nu, Dhe-nu etc which are very common in the Aryan or Aryanised society. In Manipur accounts Poiraiton's mother is named Piyai-nu (Priya-nu) and Pakhangba's maternal grand-mother that is the mother of Yabiroka is named Saya-nu. Leaving aside these names the Manipur accounts say that Leima Leinaotabi (Rima Linota in Sanskritised style) is a lady who married the same uterine brothers namely king Thongaren and his younger brother Poiraiton. Yabiroka the mother of Pakhangba is said to be a polyandrous lady having three husbands. This practice is still seen among some of the Himalayan tribes of this date. Even in Tibet to-day both polyandry and polygamy are in vogue but monogamy is the standard practice.

The above short investigation clearly reflects that the lineal ancestors of the Pandava princes were not Aryans, they were Mongoleid princes. They became gradually Aryanised in course of time. Secondly in course of Aryanisation, the Aryans not only

infused their culture but also infused their blood in the higher social stratum of society which became a social order of the day. There was a social institution for the recognition of a child, the *auras putra* and the *kshetra putra*. Any women conceived a child by whatever the source of the genes may be, gave birth to a child, then the child belonged to the family to which her legal husband belonged being a *kshetra putra*. Shanta-nu was succeeded from his grandson onwards by all *kshetra putras* not belonged to his genes. It may be noted while selecting sperms when Vichitrabirja died issueless they considered the Aryan sperms but not the Mongoloids. When Bhis-ma possibly a classic Himalayan Mongoloid word like Susi-ma, Ichu-ma etc. refused to ascend the throne they sought the sperm of Vyasa the Aryan. The Mahabharata describes in a fantastic way how Ambalika became nervous and pale on seeing the bulging eyes and curly hair of Vyasa when he came for copulation. As the child was conceived when she was pale, she gave birth to a *Pandu varna* child meaning 'pale or yellow complexioned' child. Because of this context some historians feel the Pandavas deriving from Pandu were 'yellow skinned Mongoloids'. In course of time most of the non-Aryan people of the Gangetic plains became fully Aryanised. They became boasted for any trace of Aryan blood in them. But contrary to this sentiment the following may be pointed out. Even in late Christian era there is evidence of the above process. People used to submit their young wives to the Aryan Gurus for their progeny. Girls were given to the Aryan Gurus before their marriage as done in the case of *Ari* lords of Burma. Owing to a late period the process of Aryanisation in Manipur could not be completed but rather met with failures, the process turned otherwise; and to-day it appears to be vulgar, infamy and immoral. The mass began to look at it contemptuously. As a result of it king Pamheba the greatest autocrat monarch of Manipur is charged a *kshetra putra* of Charairongba where his queen had an illicit relation with one Brahmin Guru in a clandestine book and further alleged him for patricide for being not a true son of Charairongba.

The impact of Aryan culture gained momentum. More and more of Mongoloids adopted to the way of Aryan life. They adopted Aryan names concurrently with their vernacular names. Thus the Mongoloids culture sank into the Aryan realms. The Aryanised women lost their freedom and became a faithful subordinate to their husbands with the so-called social taboo the *sati*. In the name of *Satism* women were roasted alive by throwing into the fire of the pyre on the corpse of their dead husbands. Thus from freedom of polyandry they became chained to death with their dying husbands.

As stated above, people boasted if they had some blood relations with the Aryans saying *Arya-putra*. The more they could use Sanskrit words in their dialects the higher is their status in Aryanhood. They became unhappy to mention their true ethnic identity either dark skinned origin or yellow-skinned Mongoloids. It may not be too wrong to say the Brahmins in general were of Aryan origin in the four tier system of caste and rest at the most may have elements of Aryan. However among the Brahmins too we find anthropologically classic Mongoloids, Dravidoids and Australoids. High caste Kshetriyas-in general have strong elements of Aryans.

As regards the early pre Aryan culture of the Himalyan tribe like Kalinga (Kalinga) from non-Manipur sources can only be attributed to the findings of Dr. W.C. Smith in course of his investigations on some Phillipine tribes like Ifungao, Ilangao or Ibalao and Kalinga who are now grouped to have belonged to Bontoc Irogot group in connection with the investigation of the Ao Nagas. He points out that the cultural pattern of these tribes have striking similarities with that of the Ao Naga culture both the past and the present. These Phillipine tribes used to keep their dead bodies for several days and followed with feast, some of them as stated by Sawyer used to dry their dead bodies over fire, to adopt the institution of trial marriages, to control administration by elders--a democratic group not by the kings and to adopt the unthreshed rice as the medium of exchange.

Dr. Smith, from the similarities of culture exhibited by these tribes and the Ao Nagas firmly believes that these group of people belonged to the same ethnic group and as they migrated from their primeval home they carried these cultural elements with them.

Thus the Kalinga tribes of the Bontoc Irogot group as mentioned above cannot be other than the Kalingas of the ancient Indian kingdom of Kalinga. It is most likely that they migrated to the East Indies from Kalinga by sea routes. No record is available with us for the investigation on the period on which these tribes moved to the east. It is most probable that they moved in the post-Asokan period. The Himalayan tribes Moranga, Kalinga, Panga, Anga had common ways of life. The Arayanised group had totally merged their culture with the Aryan culture while those who were partially Arayanised or not much affected by Arayanisation or who were segregated, the image of their ancient culture is still visible.

The Caucasian stain present among the Meiteis may be investigated as follows. The Sakyas who moved to the upper Burma in the second century B.C. and third century A.D. had comparatively strong Aryan elements. They first settled in the valley now known as Kabow valley. Then they expanded their settlements to the Upper Irrawaddy valley from where they dispersed to other parts. The Sakyas of the Upper Irrawaddy valley was subjected under the pressure of tribes of lai origin from about the third century A.D. and had to move further north along the upper course of the Mahi river and established petty kingdoms there, of which the kingdom of Thongaren as found in Manipuri account is one of them. The people inhabiting the kingdom of Thongaren were Nung, Khu, Lei, Kham, Man, Lai, Nga, Hou etc. besides the Chakkhas (Sakyas) and their admixtures. These tribes are now represented largely by the Manipuris, Mismis, Tangkhuis, Ao Nagas etc. Had the Sakyas strong elements of Aryans in them, the above mentioned tribes must have some sporadic Aryan elements. Modern investigations have shown the presence of Aryan elements in the above group of people.

Thus the Aryan elements found among the Meiteis are not the result of frequent passing of Aryans in pre-historic days in the valley as commonly supposed. It is the Sakya tribe who brought it with them from their early homeland in the northern Gangetic plains. The elite of the Sakyas of that period got completely amalgamated with the Aryans and became the so-called Indo-Aryans. The complete amalgamation of all the Sakyas inhabiting the northern Indian plains cannot be expected much earlier than the Gupta period. Now original Sakya is no more found in India, they became Indo-Aryans. This is probably the reason why some Indian scholars feel the Sakyas were Aryans. This is probably the reason why some Indian scholars feel the Sakyas were Aryans. The Aryan elements of Indo-Aryan Brahmins which constituted about 5% of the Meitei population appear to have confined within the Brahmin groups however some stray dispersals of that element is not entirely ruled out.

The Himalayan Mongoloids were possibly a part of the great Bracycephalic Laptorrhine human race which once supposed to have spread Central Asia, Northern China and the western plateaus. R. B. Dixon feels these bracycephalic laptorrhine type of people, 'appears to represent the southern extension of a great area, characterised by this factor, which includes most of Central Asia and great plateaus, Northern China and much to the north-east portion of the continent and as a type shows very close relationship with the Alpine, so widely spread in Central and Western Europe'.

## THE MEITEI-MAYANG SYNDROME

The sub-*clan* of the *Poireis* to which originally tribes like *Lei-hou* etc belonged, and its ruler *Naothingkhong* were completely under the influence of the *Mangang Haos* who were absorbed by them at about the early reigning period of *Naothingkhong*. The impact of the *Mangang Haos* were so forceful that the name of the sub-*clan* itself later changed to *Mangang*.

The principality at *Lamangdong* was the very *Basa* principality of the *Mayang* that moved en masse to *Lamangdong* at about 1225 A.D. The chief of this principality was however a *Bangal*. These *Bangals* and proto-*Bangals* of the *Basa* principality was under the influence of the *Mayangs*. Even their princess was given the *Mayang* title *Chingurembi* meaning 'as graceful as the goddess' in the *Mayang* dialect. The religious worship of that *Lamangdong* principality was *Saivism* and possibly with certain image of *Vishnu* cult. The *Mayangs* of that principality were perhaps the follower of *Saivism*.

After the marriage of *Chingurembi* to *Naothingkhong*, it appears *Naothingkhong* came under the religious influence of his queen *Chingurembi* who was a *Saivite*. They became worshippers of *Siva* and *Devi* as evident from the worship of *Devi* by *Khongtekcha* as discussed in the section on Religion. It is very likely that the court of *Khongtekcha* was predominated by *Bangals*, *Mayangs* and proto-*Bangals* who were the followers of the purer form of *Saivism*. It is also likely that many of the *Mangangs* were deprived of their decorations infavour of *Mangangs*. It may be mentioned here that the commander-in-chief of *Khongtekcha* was a *Mangang* tribe named *Thongak Lakpicha*. The suffix '-*cha*' is a very common form of the *Mangangs*, and tribes of *Bodo* origins but not with the *Chakkhans* and other neo-Tibetan tribes. The image of this culture is also felt in the name of *Khongtekcha* and

Keirencha. With this background the Mangangs looked at the new Mayangs who belonged to an akin tribe with them with hatred and jealousy. Thus the seed of Mangang-Mayang syndrome was shewn.

There was a lull for sometime till the Mayang fugitives who moved to the north-west through the hill terrains and gorges after their Lamangdong principality was uprooted by the Keges, got mixed with other Tibeto-Burman tribes of Bodo origin who were also akin to the Mayangs and attacked the Poireis in the beginning of the 16th century A. D. By this period the identity of the original Mayangs appears to have lost and their associated tribes of Bodo origin were called Mayangs. Since then there had been constant threats of the Mayangs for more than one and a half century. At times the Poireis were on the verge of defeat in the hands of the Mayangs. In the Koch account it is stated that the king of Manipur accepted their suzerainty but this is not found in the accounts of Manipur. However there are evidences in which the Poirei kings used to give their princesses in marriages to the Mayang kings possibly to avert conflicts with them. Thus the hatred for the Mayangs was an active factor for centuries.

On the other hand different tribes inhabiting Imphal valley became one unit under the hegemony of the Poirei kings. The united tribe became known as Meitei. The matter then became a Meitei-Mayang issue. With the weakening of powers of other tribes, who were categorised as Mayangs, better relationship had been established between the Meiteis and those tribes who came under the category of Mayangs later. Thus the common name Mayang applying to these earlier tribes receded e.g. the Tripuris were formerly called Mayang more precisely Mayang-Akoksha became known as Takhen. The proto-Bangals who were associated with the Mayang tribes became known as Mayang Kalisha. Finally the appellation Mayang was exclusively applied to the proto-Bangal. Thus the anger and indignation for the Mayangs were shifted to the proto-Bangals. By that period the Bangals and other Indo-Aryans were called Pangal (Bangal) and Marbak

respectively. However at a later period both Bangals and other Indo-Aryans were also categorised as Mayangs.

In the 18th century A.D. a Mayang religious preacher named Shantidas Gosai came and influenced the Poirei king Pamheiba. Shantidas persuaded Pamheiba to accept the new religion i. e. Ramandi Dharma and to declare Ramandi Dharma as the state religion at a time when the Meiteies were in the devouring mouth of the Tantric cult. Pamheiba did it. The new religion was based on *bhakti cult* which was at poles apart with the Tantric cult. On the instigation or rather on the advice of the religious preacher Shantidas Gosai, Pamheiba purged the Tantric literature and burnt them. The burning of Tantric literature enraged the serious upholders of Tantricism even though they could not raise their heads against the wish of the autocrat monarch. Along with the coming of the new religion the Poirei rulers came under the influence of new Mayangs. The dormant syndrome started to rekindle. The hatred for Mayang grew more and more.

In 1947 the Meities became a free nation after an occupation of 56 years by the British Imperialists. Manipur was then merged to the Indian Union in the year 1949 A. D. Another British type rule started again but with a different administrator. This time it was a Mayang administrator. It may be mentioned here by that time there were thousands who were born before the British occupation, felt that the British rule was happier than the Mayang rule and cursed the Mayang rulers without analysing the process which led an unhealthy form of merger by abolishing a popular government by one Mayang man rule, by their own fellow Meiteis who were the so-called the great Meitei politicians of that period. With the introduction of the Constitution in 1954 A. D. the Meiteis were reduced to the third grade citizens of the Indian Republic even denying the fundamental rights. The hope of the Meitei politicians who boasted that they were first Indians and last Indians were shattered. The Mayang administrators experimented different forms of administrations not found in political science. In short the Meitei became a laboratory piece in the



hands of the Mayang administrators. Thus on the whole a chunk of the Meiteis felt disgusted and openly expressed Manipur was a neo-colony of the Mayangs in imitation of their British masters. The Meitei politicians who surrendered their rights quite paradoxically started agitation again for the restoration of their surrendered rights. With much hesitation the Mayang administrators released the rights.

Economically the Meiteis were very backward. They were under the Meitei feudalism a forerunner to capitalism. With the emergence as a component part of the Indian Republic, Manipur came under the sway of Indian capitalism. All big merchants and big guns happen to be Mayangs. The sum total of all these relations have made the Meiteis look the Mayangs with hatred. There is a saying, "If you see a Mayang and a viper, kill the Mayang first".

## POIREI PRINCIPALITY

## THE CHAKKHA DYNASTY

1. Poireiton (c 810-850 A.D.)
  2. Tabung Shingminnaba alias Shing-tabung (840-890A.D.)
  3. Pangminnaba (c 890-905 A.D.)
  4. Khunthiba (c 905-925 A.D.)
  5. Luwang Punshiba (c 925-980 A.D.)
  6. (It is not known who succeeded Luwang Punshiba. Records so far available with us indicate that he had nine wives and several sons of which some names are found).
  7. (It is also not known who was the 6th successor of Poireiton, but one of the grandsons of Luwang Punshiba named Luwang Langmaiba who was the Lambu-Tupu of the Leihous is found to be very intricately described amidst allegorical writings as the father of Nongta as discussed in the section on Pakhangba)
  8. (Not known)
- Luwang kings
- 9.
  - 10.
  - 11.

## Luwang Langmaiba

1. Nongta (Pakhangba) (c 980-1020 A.D.)
2. Khuiyoi Tompok (c 1020-1055 A.D.)
3. Taothingmang (c 1055-75 A.D.)
4. Khui Ningomba (c 1075-92 A.D.)
5. Pensaiba (c 1092-1115 A.D.)
6. Kaokhangba (c 1115-1133 A.D.)
7. Naokhamba (c 1133-1140 A.D.)
8. Naophangba (c 1140-1171 A.D.)
9. Sameirang (c 1171-1190 A.D.)
10. Ura Konthouba (c 1190-1215 A.D.)
11. Naothingkhong (c 1215-1250 A.D.)

Mangang kings →

## THE POLITICAL HISTORY OF THE POIREI KINGS

### 1. Poiraiton :

The first formal king of this land i.e. the Imphal valley was Poiraiton. He was the younger brother of king Thongaren of Khamnung Sawa. He migrated with a horde of settlers belonging to Chakkha, Nung, Kham, Man, Khu, Lei, Nga tribes and settled on the south-west of Kangla-tongbi. The horde belonged to a group of Himalayan Mongoloids, neo-Tibetans, tribes of Tai origin. They entered the valley from a north-easterly direction. There were some groups of early settlers when they arrived on this land. They were Chenglei, Shelloy-Langmai, Kouba, Kangba etc. Most of these tribes belonged to the Tibeto-Burman and neo-Burmese tribes.

Imphal valley was a virgin land by that period awaiting a name to be given. Neither the Chengleis nor other tribes had given any name to this country. The horde of Poiraiton gave the name 'Poirei' for the first time to this land after the name of Poiraiton the founder of their kingdom possibly after the death of Poiraiton.

Poiraiton became the first formal king of Poirei at about 810 ~~A.D.~~. Before coming to this land Poiraiton had already become a widower. He had six children left by his deceased wife. At the time of his migration to this land he married his own sister-in-law Leima Leinaotabi the second wife of king Thongaren. She was a very witty woman. She knew the art of weaving and spinning, the science of preparing herbal medicines. She could prepare delicious dishes. On their way to this land they halted at several places. It took them a considerable time to reach this land. Poiraiton, on their way, lost all his six lovely children namely (1) Chakkha Khonghanba, (2) Sagang Yaimaba, (3) Leishang

Khekwaiba (4) Kangdon Leinouba, (5) Huiyai Konthingnu, and (6) Haochong Langmeinu. The last two were daughters. However a son was born to him by his second wife Leima Leinaotabi. He was given the name Tabung Shingminnaba, also called Shing Tabung and Ningol Saran-ba. This boy was about to die due to a serious illness.

When they settled on this land they became soon prosperous and increased their numbers. It appears for a considerable period their mortality rate was very low. During the period of Poireiton there was no struggle for power or supremacy. The tribes lived as if a big family with Poireiton as their common father. The reigning period of Poireiton is estimated to be from about 810 A.D. to about 850 A.D.

The tribe of Poireiton worshipped the Sky-god *Sararen* by offering food they ate for their fertility and prosperity. The worship included sacrifice of cow called *Shantam-ba* the Vedic form of Sula-gavya sacrifice. They were non-vegetarians and ate beef and pork besides fowls and aquatic animals like fish. Rice was their staple food. It appears they did not grow vegetables much but collected wild varieties whenever they wanted to eat. It is not known with certainty whether they used to plough the fields for cultivating rice even though they brought cows and bulls. However there is a strong indication that they did ploughing as the word *lāngol* is found, which is an appliance for ploughing earth.

There was institution of marriage. The pedigrees of female line were very important unlike other Indo-Aryan tribes. This is perhaps the reason why we get records on the lines of female sides in the accounts of this land. Polygamy was a very common practice but polyandry too is mentioned. The importance of recording female line may be attributed to the practice of the latter. Very often in these early societies children who were born by different fathers used to live with their mothers, usually fostered by their step fathers who were the last surviving husbands of the women. The loss or confusion on father's line is often encountered in Manipur accounts.

The causes of this may also be attributed to the above circumstances. The society was patriarchal.

Records indicate that there was no art of writing. They did not bring any script to write. On the other hand the earlier tribes as mentioned above were very primitive. As discussed in earlier sections, they, particularly the Shelloy-Langmais were naked, did not use even fire, did not construct houses to live in; they used root cravices of big trees and the bending tops of trees as their houses; they lived mainly on wild food. The tribe of Poireiton looked down them. The Chengleis settled on the north-west from the settlement of Poireis and the Shelloy-Langmais on the Langmaijing now known as the Mapao hills. The Poireis seem to be somewhat conservative. They did not like to get inter-marriages with these tribes. In course of about one century the Chengleis and and Shelloy-Langmais progressed rapidly.

Administrative system: We do not get any record dealing explicitly with the administrative and judiciary systems of Poireiton. Only feed back results can throw light on it. In later period we find the administrative units were called *panas*. The kingdom was divided into a number of *panas* and each *pana* was under the charge of a *lakpa*. The function of a *lakpa* is equal to that of the Deputy Commissioner of a district. In Cheitharol Kumbaba it is recorded that Loiyumba (c 1310-16 A.D.) introduced reforms in the administrative system by dividing his kingdom into 6 *panas*. Each *pana* had to maintain a standing force in the palace office in turn which was called a *loop*.

In addition to *lakpas* there were other posts called *lambu* and *tupu* and in later period it is found to have been used by compounding the two words as *lambu-tupu* and seems to have altered its meaning too. It was chiefly given to the officer-in-charge of a tributary tribe, and occasionally another term applying to the officer-in-charge is also found to have been given which is the name of the tribe with the addition of a suffix *-pa* or *-ba* e.g. Luwang Likleng was given the title *Langmaiba* which means the officer-in-charge of the Langmai tribe.

The Meitei units of land measure is called *pari* and its fractions are *lourāk* and *sangam* where *lourāk* is half of *pari* and *sangam* is one fourth of *pari*. One *pari* is approximately equal to one hectare of the metric measure.

The etymologies of the above words namely *pana*, *pari*, *lourāk*, and *sangam* are not clearly known but believed to be a Chakkhan formation. In the Moriyan dialect of Asokan period we find the same word *pana* but used in the sense of an exchange unit or money unit not an administrative unit.

So it is seen that the above mentioned words were in existence since the time of Poireiton but their applications seem to be in their embryonic stages. There was no pressure of man on land, there were plenty of land and hence there was no use of land measures, but the administrative machinery is supposed to have been functioning. We find the post of *lambru*, *tupu*, *langmaiba* from about the period of Luwang Punshiba

## 2. Shing-tabung (Tabung Shingminna a) :

Poireiton was succeeded by his son Shing-tabung at about 880 A. D. We have no record of any event during his reign. However the Poireis continued to prosper and increase their numbers.

## 3. Pangminnaba :

Tabung Shingminnaba was succeeded by his son Pangminnaba. It is estimated that Pangminnaba ruled for a period of about 890-905 A.D. There is no notable event during his reign.

## 4. Khunthiba :

Pangminnaba was succeeded by his son Khunthiba at about 905 A.D. He reigned upto about 930 A.D. Like his two predecessors there is no notable event during his reign.

## 5. Luwang Punshiba :

Khrantshiba was succeeded by his son Luwang Punshiba. He lived very long hence the title *Punshiba* meaning—'long lived' was given to him. In later periods the descendants of Poireiton who were the chiefs of the Poirei principality later named as the Luwang principality with the emergence of another principality ruled by some descendants of Poireiton, were frequently given the title *Punshiba*. It became a convention to use this title by the different tribes in the names of their ancestors at a later period. Upto the time of Luwang Punshiba the Poirei principality flourished rapidly without any interference from external forces. All the Poireis lived together very peacefully. Luwang Punshiba had nine wives and several sons and daughters, grand-sons and grand-daughters, great-grand-sons and great-grand-daughters while he was alive so far available from literary sources. Some eleven names of sons are found to have been mentioned in literary accounts. When he was growing old there were probably discords among his sons and when he died there was possibly a quarrel over the succession of throne. As a result the whole neo-Tibetan family was broken up and began to be separated. It is not clearly known who among his sons actually succeeded him but it is likely that one of his grandsons namely Langmaiba commonly known as Luwang Langmaiba succeeded the throne after the chaos. It is estimated that Luwang Punshiba reigned upto about 980 A.D.

Two parallel principalities began to develop in Poirei from about this period. The principality ruled by the descendants of Luwang Punshiba became known as Luwang principality after the name of Luwang Punshiba. Luwang is a title given to these chiefs of this principality. The title is also adopted by the Tai princes. The Luwang principality continued to exist as an independent principality upto about 1300 A.D. This Chakha-Nung sub-group of the neo-Tibetans to which Luwang Punshiba belonged became known as the Luwang clan and the people as Luwangs. The early Luwangs were composed of two distinct tribes namely Luwang proper who were Chakhan origin and Nungba or sometimes

Nung-bal who were of Tai origin. The Luwangs continued to maintain their chieftainship till it was subjugated by the other principalities. The seat of learning of the Poireis however continued in the Luwangs.

The Khu-Man sub-group also started to separate from the neo-Tibetan family. They started absorbing new immigrants. They moved towards the south-west of their settlement and began to live quite independently before they moved finally to the southern parts of Imphal valley at about 1250 A D at a place now known as Mayang-Imphal area. When they settled in the Mayang-Imphal area they were known as Khuman-Nongyai or simply Khuman.

The other group namely Lei-hou and Lei-nung who appear to be more aggressive started a parallel principality under the chieftainship of Nongta. The principality ruled by Nongta who was given the name Pakhangba of the Sanamahi-Pakhangba myth in the 16th century A.D. was not given any name.

Virtually after the death of Luwang Punshiba the neo-Tibetan family was divided into three groups namely (1) Chakkha-Nung, (2) Lei-hou, Lei-nung and (3) Khu-man. In subsequent political history of the Poirei kings, we will deal mainly with the history of the Leihou-Leinung rulers who became known as the Poirei rulers when they got supremacy over others at later periods except some references of the other groups. There was no enmity among these groups for a long time but in later period there were killings among these group of people too for power and supremacy.

### 1. Pakhangba :

Nongta also called Nongta Tukuplik who belonged to a Chakkha tribe was invited by the Lei-nungs of the Poirei to become their chief, who by that time probably was living in his maternal grand-father's house with his mother Yabiroka. The maternal grand-father of Nongta was the Lei-hou chief and probably he himself belonged to a Lei tribe. Nongta accepted and became the chief of this group of neo-Tibetans at about 980 A.D. Nongta had one



younger sister named Sira Konthingnu. His mother had three husbands of which Tupu Likleng alias Luwang Langmaiba who was the father of Nongta may be mentioned.

Nongta married a girl named Laisa-ra who belonged to a Heirong tribe. He had also another paramour named Konthing Nura-bi who belonged to a Hangoi clan of the Thoupal tribe. These tribes inhabited in the upper Iril course. Nongta was very adventurous, however there seems to be no notable events during his reign. It is seen that the Poireis prospered well and were looking for more power. Nongta had a quarrel with Anganga who belonged to a Kouba tribe over settlement of lands near the source of the Kongba river. The worship of these group of people was the same as that found during the reign of Poireiton. The seed for bloodshed seems to have sown from about this period. One thing to be noted is that at about the 16th century A.D. the Mangang chroniclers started mystifying Nongta. They also magnified him being the founder of that dynasty. They tried to conceal the name of his father taking the advantage of the confusion arising out of the number of his step-fathers. They projected Nongta to the Pakhangba of the Sanamahi-Pakhangba myth. Not only Pakhangba they also gave him several other names. Details may be seen in the section Pakhangba. In subsequent parts we shall use mainly the name Pakhangba. He died at about 1627 A.D.

## 2. Khuiyoi Tompok :

When Pakhangba died he was succeeded by his son Khuiyoi Tompok born by Laisa-ra. Khuiyoi Tompok married a girl named Langmainu Ahongbi belonging to the Shelloy-Langmai tribe and who lived on the Langmai-ching. About the name Langmainu or Nongmainu it has been discussed in the section on Shelloy-Langmai. Upto the time of Pakhangba the Shelloy-Langmai tribes continued to be very primitive.

It is said that the Shelloy-Langmais by that period did not construct houses. They took shelter in the root crevices of big

trees, on tree tops where the bending tops of bamboos covered trees. They did not cook food but lived on wild roots and honey. The thunder and lightning were their horror, and they took that natural phenomenon as the lowering of the sky to crush them. They were naked. In such stage of civilization the family of Langmainu Ahongbi who settled on the Langmai-ohing hills now known as the Mapao hills took the profession of collecting honey and wax from the jungle. The primitiveness of Langmainu Ahongbi was tamed by Khuiyoi Tompok and made her his queen. She was a very beautiful girl. The book Ningthourol Lambuba compares the falling of hairs on her bosom after a bunch on the back of the neck to green short grasses growing on beautiful hills where the wind blows. The book further mentions that her tribe was not far off from their primitive yolk.

Khuiyoi Tompok tried to develop a sounding drum. He first tried with the skin of a deer but he could not get the desired sound. He then tried with the skin of a tiger, that too failed. At last his aunt Sira Konthing-nu the younger sister of Pakhangba killed a beautiful young cow and skinned her hide. She made a circular loop of a piece of bamboo and spread the hide over the loop and tied with cane all around the rim of the loop. The finished product was tested by a wooden hammer. It gave the desired sound. Thus a beating drum was developed during the period of Khuiyoi Tompok.

It is also said that during the time of Khuiyoi Tompok the art of printing the border of cloths with circular rings was developed. It is possibly the forerunner of embroidering on *phanek phibal*. The experts developed dyes of different pigments for dyeing cloths. It is said that cloths had been dyed with red colour for the first time during the reign of Khuyoi Tompok. In metallurgy they could smelt down bronze and bell metal and manufactured *senbung* and other utensils.

Thus from about the period of Khuiyoi Tompok, people looked forward for the development of science and technology. The economic condition of the people was also good.

The period of Khuiyoi Tompok is estimated to be from about 1020 A.D. to 1055 A.D.

### 3. Taothingmang :

When Khuiyoi Tompok died at about 1055 A.D. he was succeeded by his son Yoibeiton who later assumed the name Taothingmang. Taothingmang was not the eldest son of Khuiyoi Tompok, he was the second and possibly the youngest son who ascended the throne quite young. Taothingmang had one elder brother named Yoimomba. The reason for the abdication of throne by Yoimomba is not clearly known.

Upto the time of Taothingmang the volume of water present in the northern part of Imphal valley was much more than that of the 20th century A D. So Taothingmang took a major project of draining water from the water logged areas on a war footing. While supervising the project he was encountered by one Funan Telheiba. Cheitharol Kumbaba describes the place of encounter to be on the east of present Lilong, but this is doubtful. It seems to be on the north-west of the Nongmaijng hills. In that encounter Taothingmang was struck by an arrow of Telheiba the Funan tribe. The real name of that Funan is not found in the text. The word Telheiba is an adjective meaning 'good archer'. When the arrow of that Funan struck on the abdomen, Taothingmang bled profusely. Cheitharol Kumbaba further states that since that event the place became known as Ngang-lou. It may be mentioned here that the area under consideration as mentioned in the Cheitharol Kumbaba was the area inhabited by the Ngangoi tribes and hence the names like Ngangoi-pat, Ngangoi-lou (Ngang-lou) etc. derived. More over the scaling of these Poireis was confined within the enclosures of the upper IriI and the Thoubal rivers. After that encounter Taothingmang moved to Lok-kha, Hao-kha. The location of Lok-kha and Hao-kha is somewhere to the south-east of Sagolmang and to the north of the Nongmaijng hills, but in the foot note comment of Cheitharol Kumbaba it is given to be a place at Sugnu and south of it, which is definitely wrong. The

Funans possibly entered the valley during the reign of Khuiyoi Tompok from easterly and south-easterly directions. They belonged to an Austro-Asiatic group of people who later merged with the Nongbals. Taothingmang and his predecessors were more acquainted with the topography of the upper Iril course. They had cleared the course of the Iril river too. During the time of Taothingmang much of the water from water logged areas were drained out bringing more cultivable land masses.

Taothingmang married a girl named Hao-nu-khu who belonged to a Hao-khu tribe who inhabited the Lok-kha and Hao-kha area which was not very far from Kongba-mau (Kongba-ru) the capital of the Poirei (Leinung group). These Hao-khu tribes migrated by the north-easterly route and settled in some areas lying between the rivers of Iril and Thoubal in their upper courses. It is estimated that these tribes settled at about the 10th century A.D. in these areas and they became prosperous very soon and became a target of other tribes to exploit their wealth, and the Poirei kings frequently married their girls. Taothingmang reigned upto about 1075 A.D.

#### 4. Khui Ningomba :

Taothingmang was succeeded by his son Khui Ningomba. By the time of Khui Ningomba the descendants of Pakhangba or Poirei (Leinang) became more powerful. The power of the Luwang principality was greatly reduced even though they continued to be the centre for learning. So the power of the Poireis was entirely on the hands of the descendants of Pakhangba. There is no notable event during the reign of Khui Ningomba.

Khui Ningomba married a girl named Hao-nu-hal who belonged to the tribe of his mother. It is estimated that he reigned upto about 1092.

#### 5. Pengshiba :

Khui Ningomba was succeeded by his son Pengshiba. No record is available about the activities of Pengshiba. Hence it is believed that there was no notable event during his reign.

Pengshiba married a girl named Lai-tong-khu who also belonged to the same tribe of his mother and grand-mother. It is estimated that he reigned upto about 1115 A.D.

6. **Kaokhangba :**

Pengshiba was succeeded by his son Kaokhangba. He was the only child of Pengshiba. There is no notable event during his reign also. He also married a girl named Lai-ton-hal who also belonged to the same tribe with his mother, grand-mother, great-grand-mother. It is estimated that he reigned upto about 1130 A.D.

7. **Naokhamba :**

Kaokhangba was succeeded by his son Naokhamba. By this period the prowess of the Poireis were felt by other tribes. Naokhamba married a woman belonging to the descendants of the Yaoreiba family by force or by forced abduction from the custody of her husband. The woman had already conceived a child and in five months' term of pregnancy. Her husband was Thangyi Khongjromba a Chenglei chief. When she became the wife of Naokhamba she gave birth to son whom they gave the name Naophang Ahanba. Further she bore two more children to Naokhamba. The two children were given the names Naophangba and Yoikum Chenbi respectively of which the latter was a daughter.

Yaoreiba is believed to be a sixth degree descendant of Luwang Punshiba who became very rich and possessed a large number of white goats. In the dialect of the Chakkha-Nung they called goat *yao*. Hence the family was given the name Yaoreiba meaning 'possessor of goat'. There was another one family who possessed a large number of fowls, and the family was given the name Kaireiba where *kai* means hen in their dialects. It so happened one day that some chicken were lost which belonged to Kaireiba family and they believed they were stolen by their neighbours. They charged them. The neighbour on the other hand charged

the loss of some white goats to be responsible by Kaireibas. The charges and counter-charges led to a quarrel. Finally they brought to a compromise and shifted their settlement to some more spacious places by clearing shrubs and bushes.

It is estimated that Naokhamba reigned upto about 1140. A.D.

### 8. Naophangba :

Naokhamba was succeeded by his son Naophangba after a contest with his uterine half brother in about c 1140 A. D. Naophang Ahanba claimed as he was the eldest son he should succeed his father, but people knew that he was the son of Thangyi Khongjromba and were against his ascension. The mother intervened and asked her both sons to see the verdict of god by dipping in water. In that test the rightful man could remain longer in water. The two brothers agreed and entered the ordain in which Naophangba came out to be the man who would become king and hence he succeeded his father.

Naophangba was a prominent king. In different accounts he is found to have been frequently referred to. The successors do not refer to other predecessors except Naophangba. But no record is found in this regard except some anecdotes.

Naophangba went for a hunting at Ngarangyal on the north-eastern hills along with his faithful servants. The name Ngarangyal is derived from a Shelloy-Langmai word meaning the 'path of wild beast'. In that hunting they killed several wild boars including a very young one. When they were returning home, Naophangba ordered his servants not to eat the young one. Naophangba left them and halted that night in the house of his second wife Kaireima who belonged to a Kharoi tribe. It so happened that one of the servants named Yangkhuba who belonged to a Nongbal tribe, possibly did not hear the advice of the king and ate the young boar. The next day the king came to know that the young boar was eaten up by Yangkhuba. He was very much annoyed and punished Yangkhuba by plucking out the long beard of Yangkhuba.

Naophangba married two girls one belonged to a descendant of Yaoreiba and the other belonged to a Kharoi tribe or clan of the Thoubal tribe. The Yaoreiba-shanu gave birth to a son named Sameirang, while the Kharoi-ron i.e. Kharoi girl named Kaireima gave birth to a son named Thamanglang. The descendants of Thamanglang became known as Yengkhom a *sagei* in the Meitei setup. Kaireima is said to have been born by Wanglen the younger brother of Yoirangpok the chief of the Thoubals who belonged to the Kharoi clan of the Thoubals. In a later period the Kharoi tribes merged in the Khumans and became Khumans. Yoirangpok was a very noted person. He is found to have been entered in different accounts as one of the ancestors of Khuman often with the title 'Punshiba'.

It is estimated that Naophangba reigned upto about 1171 A.D

#### 9. Sameirang :

Naophangba was succeeded by his Sameirang born by his wife who belonged to the descendants of Yaoreiba. It was a period of distrust and quarrel. Then it began killing for power and supremacy. Contest for throne became very acute. Several waves of Tibeto-Burmans who migrated were absorbed by some earlier tribes. Peace and tranquility were no more. Politically the land had changed substantially. Sameirang killed Kwakpa Thawanthaba in a severe encounter. Kwakpa Thawanthaba was a chieftain, most probably of Astro-Asiatic group of people like Funan, Maring, Mon-Khmer who merged with the Nongbals. There were revenges and vendettas. Sameirang also attacked Kumba the Langmei Chieftain while the latter was fishing and subdued him.

Sameirang married the daughter of Thing who belonged to a Kampong clan of the Man tribe of Khu-man. Thing was the chief of the Kampong. It is estimated that Sameirang reigned upto about 1186 A.D.

#### 10. Ura Konthouba :

Sameirang was succeeded by his son Ura Konthouba. He was a powerful king. One day the Shelloy-Langmais went on an expedition

to assault Haokap, Chingsang, Khunpham and Ngangoheng. They also planned to attack the Poirais on their return. While doing so they happened to pass through the territory of the Poirais and came across one man named Kadem who belonged to a Nongbal tribe and who was a faithful servant of Ura Konthouba, fishing in a nearby lake. When Nongbal Kadem heard the war cry of the Shelloy-Langmai warriors he was much frightened and pretended to be dead. The Shelloy-Langmai warriors took him to be dead, left him. When the Shelloy-Langmais left him he came running at night and reported the plan of the Shelloy-Langmais to attack the Poirais after returning from the assault of Haokap, Chingsang etc. Ura Konthouba soon prepared for a counter attack. The force moved on horse back and ambushed the Shellow-Langmais some where at source of the Naga stream and killed several of them. The source of the Naga stream is at present the Indo-Burma Road north-east of Luwangsangbam. Thus Ura Konthouba crushed the assault of the Shelloy-Langmais but could not subdue them. On the other hand the Shelloy-Langmais all the time prepared for a revenge of the assault, but outwardly they did not raise their heads. As the Shelloy-Langmais could not revenge directly on Ura Konthouba, they resorted to other means to his relatives, nobles and servants. In such a situation his son Hongnem-yoy Khunjao (Naothingkhong) ran away from home and lived in Shelloy-Langmai by marrying a girl of that tribe under disguise.

Ura Konthouba married a girl named Nongjengau who belonged to a Khaba clan of the Thoubal tribe. It is estimated that he reigned upto about 1225 A.D.

#### 11. Naothingkhong :

Ura Konthouba was succeeded by his son Naothingkhong at about 1215 A.D. When Naothingkhong was about 10 or 12 years old he became very delinquent and started running away from home. He run away possibly at the early adolescence from his home for fear of his father's wrath.



He ran to the Shelloy-Langmais under disguise and married Langmainu ( Nongmainu ) Pitang-nga and lived in her house. When the Shelloy-Langmais came to know that Hongnemyoy Khunjae was none but the son of Ura Konthouba they planned to kill him to revenge the ambush and humiliation inflicted on them by Ura Konthouba. The family of Pitang-nga knew him earlier that he was the Poirei prince but they concealed his identity. When the Shelloy-Langmai warriors attacked the house of Pitang-nga at night, Naothingkhong escaped by piercing through the thatched walls on the advice of Pitang-nga. Naothingkhong was also informed of a secret route leading to the Khumans by his wife Pitang-nga. When the Shelloy-Langmai warriors found Naothingkhong escaped, they turned to Pitang-nga but they were defeated by Pitang-nga by her logical arguments. She said it was the fault of the Shelloy Langmai warriors who trespassed the territory of the Poireis without informing them. It is quite natural that the Poireis would take the action as an attack on them.

Naothingkhong took asylum in the Khumans. The Khumans by this period inhabited the area of Patsoi and its north. While he was in the Khumans he fell in love with Santing Nganbi alias Narum Kangbi the daughter of Amukoi the Khuman chieftain and married her. In the Khumans too he lived under disguise. Naothingkhong again escaped from the Khumans without informing his wife and her family. Santing Nganbi was much offended to her father and her brother Angoukoi for their ill treatment to the prince. It is believed that this time his father Ura Konthouba had sent him to the Luwangs for training in the art of administration. According to the account *Naothingkhong Phambal Kaba*, it is said that Naothingkhong married the daughter of Punshi Yumoiba the Khuman chieftain. When Ura Konthouba was getting old he sent men to bring Naothingkhong and his family back, and then sent to the Luwangs for education. The said source further states that while Naothingkhong was in the Khumans he married the daughter

of Sana-rakkha the Moirang chieftain which seems to be an interpolation. The matter has been discussed in earlier section.

When Naothingkhong was in the Luwangs, Hongnem was the Luwang chief. Hongnem was given the title 'Luwang Ningthou Panshiba'. Hongnem was very old when Naothingkhong was with them. It is said that Hongnem died when Naothingkhong was in the Luwangs, and further said that his father too died when he was still in the Luwangs. His mother sent for him to succeed his father.

Naothingkhong married girls of several tribes. Some six wives are found in different literary sources. It was probably his plan to gain more power.

Naothingkhong ascended the throne in the year o 1215 A.D. The source *Naothingkhong Phambal Kaba* further states that when Pitang-nga heard of Naothingkhong becoming king she came to the palace but found the daughter of Punshi Yumoiba sitting on the left side of the king. She then left the palace and became a *Lairembi* meaning 'goddess'. This is a half fabulous account

Naothingkhong led an expedition on the northern parts of the Loijing ranges where the Mangangs inhabited. In that engagement he defeated the Mangang chief named Konkhu-cha and seized several articles including a *tharao-chi* (an instrument made of copper for producing loud sound by blowing). He also brought with him most of their girls. For this victory he was conferred the title 'Mangang Ngamba' meaning the 'Victor of the Mangangs'.

Since this event the Mangangs gradually came down from the hills and merged with the Poirei clan to which Naothingkhong belonged. On his way back he also assaulted the Khumans who by that time better known as Thangnga and Kampong inhabiting the north-west of Patsoi, where he had a clash with them at a place close to the house of Nongmainu Soraton possibly a prominent lady belonging to a Langmai tribe who got married to the Thangnga-Kampong. As discussed in earlier sections, by that

period the Thangnga and Kampong had social intercourse with the Langmai and often Langmainus are entered as Nongmainus.

When Naothingkhong was ruling for some time an invader named Samlungfa a Pong prince appeared from the southern side. As Samlungfa was better equipped and organised Naothingkhong could not confront and ultimately surrendered. It is believed that besides horses Samlungfa also employed several elephants. Unlike other barbarian conquerors Samlungfa was a noble prince and did not commit any atrocity, rather he tried to uplift his victims who were in a very backward stage. Details are discussed in the section on Samlungfa. After staying for sometime in Poirei, Samlungfa left for further expedition by the source of the Iril river sometime earlier than 1225 A D

While Samlungfa was in Poirei he streamlined the habit, manners and general way of life of the Poireis. Immediately after Samlungfa another horde of immigrants entered the valley from the southern route and settled at Lamangdong. They were Bangals, proto-Bangals and Tibeto-Burman Mayangs led by a Sena prince of the Senas of Bangal. They carved out a principality at Lamangdong. By that period Naothingkhong was a powerful prince besides the Moriya princes of the Kege principality. A Bangal princess was given in marriage to prince Naothingkhong. The Mayang influenced name of the princess is Chingurembi. Thus a matrimonial relationship was established between the principalities of Poirei and Lamangdong.

The original Bangal name of Chingurembi is not found. It seems she became a favourite queen of Naothingkhong. Chingurembi was sent with ten attendants in time of her marriage. The image of Bangal culture in the court of Naothingkhong seems to have been strongly felt. Soon the Bangals, proto-Bangals and Mayangs became a shadow power. Along with Chingurembi a fresh wave of the cult of Siva and Devi came to the Poireis. Chingurembi was a devotee of Siva and Devi. The mythology of Saivism became very popular among the common people. People

began to worship Devi which later mixed with the culture of the Lai tribes the worship of ancestors. Chingurembi brought a new era of cultural history of this land following the streamlining of Samlungfa. However she had some demerits. It seems she was envied by other co-wives of Naothingkhong and a revolting spirit was thus infused on them. Their relatives also supported them. A general hatred for Bangals, proto-Bangals and Mayangs was created and finally the seed of the Meitei-Mayangs syndrome was formed where the Mayangs were the backbones.

There is every reason to believe that Khongtekcha was the son born by Chingurembi. However no record is available. Even Chingurembi is not found in the royal chronicle which was recasted during 1825-35 A. D. Khongtekcha became a favourite son of Naothingkhong though he was not the eldest son. It appears most of the nobles of the court supported him for the throne.

It is estimated that Naothingkhong reigned upto about 1250 A.D.

## 12. Khongtekcha :

When Naothingkhong died he was succeeded by his son Khongtekcha though quite young. No one amongst his half brothers raised their heads. Khongtekcha could gain the throne not by his physical strength but by his supporters. He was already supported by his late father, by the nobles and the people of Lamangdong principality. It may be pointed out here that some scholars even believe that the capital of Khongtekcha was at Lamangdong. It is more likely that Khongtekcha shifted his capital after reigning for sometime in the area of the Upper Iril valley, from the fear of coup d'état by his half brothers.

During the reign of Khongtekcha there was one notable event. The Keges invaded Poirei led by their Moriya chief named Oinu Seng Raja (Oinusengbaracha). It is said that he caught alive Oinu Seng Raja and 763 Keges were beheaded by his commander-in-chief Thongak Lakpicha according to Ningthourol Lambuba. Thus the Keges were reduced, but it appears the Poireis too got the worst reverses.

Khongtekcha spent time on meditation of Devi. He inherited the spiritualism from Chingurembi. A copper plate inscribing the rituals of Devi performed by Khongtekcha was discovered in the beginning of the 20th century A.D. The date of the copper plate was tempered. It is believed that the scholars who invented 33 A.D. as the date of Pakhangba got the copper plate and inscribed their forged dates by superimposing the previous one instead of preserving the document. The Devi worship was very popular and in every principal villages Devi temples were constructed before it mingled up with the ancestor worship of Lai culture of the Lai tribes

Khongtekcha died quite young. According to Cheitharol Kumbaba he reigned for 10 years. It is estimated that he died at about 1260 A.D. and left small children not fit for succession of throne. Khongtekcha married a Luwang girl named Keiren who belonged to a rich family.

### 13. Keirencha

After an interregnum of 11 years following the death of Khongtekcha the vacant throne was filled up by Keirencha possibly one of the sons of Khongtekcha. Keirencha must have been very young when Khongtekcha died and in a period of turmoil he was not fit for throne and the throne remained vacant till he attained maturity. So far available records do not give the relation between Khongtekcha and Keirencha. However we assume him to be the son.

There has been no significant event during his reign. It is estimated that he ascended the throne at about 1271 A.D. and reigned upto about 1276 A.D. and possibly he was succeeded by his brothers.

### 14. Yarba :

Keirencha was succeeded by Yarba at about 1276 A.D. The relation between Keirencha and Yarba is not known with certainty but there is every possibility of Yarba being a brother of

**Kairencha.** It is said that Yarba was a very polite king. He respected his elders. He was a good archer. There is no notable event during his reign.

He married a girl named Lambasu the daughter of a rich Nongbal. It is estimated that he reigned upto 1278 A.D.

#### 15. Ayangba

Yarba was succeeded by Ayangba. The earlier name of Ayangba is Sarichongba. The name Ayangba was given to Sarichongba when he attacked on two parties at Thoubal Moi-cha Ching quarreling over their shares of the catches of hunting and snatched away their catches swiftly. The meaning of 'swiftness' is *Ayangba*. During his reign he constructed a road on the eastern part of Imphal. The road became known as Ayang-palli.

He married a very calm lady belonging to the Luwangs. It is estimated that he reigned upto about 1281 A.D.

#### 16. Ningthoucheng.

Ayangba was succeeded by Ningthoucheng. There is no notable event during the reign of Ningthoucheng. He married a girl named Lambasu the daughter of Sanyang Khaiba who belonged to a Khuman. It is estimated that he reigned upto about 1290 A.D.

#### 17. Chenglei Ipan Lanthaba.

Ningthoucheng was succeeded by Chenglei Ipan Lanthaba. His earlier name is Thingbai Ahanba. He led an expedition in the stream of the Nawang Yi. The Nawang Yi stream was flowing near the settlement of the Chengleis in the north-western part of the valley. He could cross the swiftly running water of the stream on the onset of monsoon. Hence he was given the name Chenglei Ipan Lanthaba.

The Luwangs and the Mangangs had no longer in good relations. For the first time a group of Luwangs was attacked. It is

said that Chenglei Ipan Lanthaba attacked a group of Luwangs headed by the Luwang chief who was coming by a boat in the Nawang Yi stream and captured them. The topography of the valley had greatly changed in the 20th century A.D. The big streams of the 13th century A.D. are reduced to mere *nullas* and the valley as a whole are much dehydrated. The Nawang Yi is the Upper course of the Nambul river. Since this attack the Luwangs had been put under the subjugation of the Mangang kings.

Chenglei Ipan Lanthaba married a girl who belonged to a Nongbal tribe born by a laborious Nongbal named Arampamba. It is estimated that he reigned upto about 1294 A.D.

#### 18. Yarou Keiphaba :

Chenglei Ipan Lanthaba was succeeded by Yarou Keiphaba at about 1294 A.D. The earlier name of Yarou Keiphaba is Khamlang Atonba. It is said that one of his servants named Huitaroy was attacked by a big tiger at Louchi-pat where the Haokap and Chingsang tribes inhabited. The said tiger was caught alive by another servant named Nongthol by using a pole and then killed the animal by a spear. Khamlang Atonba caught and killed six tigers at his credit, for which he was given the name Yanglou Keiphaba. He introduced the embroidery style of *phanek phibal* which had hitherto been painted.

Yanglou Keiphaba married a girl named Khongleima who was a good singer. Khongleima was the daughter of Lamyai Lakpa a Luwang. It is estimated that he reigned upto about 1296 A.D.

#### 19. Irengba :

Yanglou Keiphaba was succeeded by Irengba at about 1296 A.D. The earlier name of Irengba is Keital Thaba. He led an expedition near Ithai where he subdued Kege Khamba, Haorok Khamba and Sedrang Khambara. He further proceeded his expedition towards Tanakha. It appears that he faced no resistance at Tanakha. He also led an expedition in the north-east direction where also he was not resisted.

Irengba was very keen about his dress. He wanted very fashionable garments and ornaments. He used the best dresses and ornaments that could be made in his time. He was a scholar. He spent his old ages in the quest of knowledge and was very ambitious.

Irengba married a girl named Tamheibi the daughter of the renowned Khauman chief Nongyai Thinkonhanba who brought the Bangals, proto-Bangals and Pasis (Basis) from the Loijing ranges to the valley.

Irengba died at about 1310 A.D. When he died his surviving wife Tamheibi wanted to erect a statue of her deceased husband, asked her sculptor Kabui Haochong Nungmucha to carve a wooden statue of the late king. Accordingly Kabui Haochong Nungmucha carved a wooden statue of the late king by means of soft wood and painted with yellow pigment. But the visitors protested that the wooden statue did not look like the late king. So Tamheibi again ordered Adon Khoirisuba a brazier to cast a bronze statue of the late king. Adon Khoirisuba tried to collect a wanted variety of wax at Ngaitan Sunaching but he could not collect it. He however managed with available materials and casted a bronze statue of the late king. This time the bronze statue looked very much like the late king.

## 20. Loiyumba

Irengba was succeeded by Loiyumba. During his reign some of his tributaries failed to pay tributes in time. So he sent his noble Angouba Haekei Lanthaba towards Sekta and ordered him not to return until the six villages of Sekta had been crushed. He also sent his half brother Khamlang Pansaba towards the hill where the chieftain Haoku Tena lived and further ordered him to reduce the village. One another noble who was known as Leihou Lambu meaning the guide and controller of the Leihous was insulted at Malloy where the chief of Malloy village asked him tauntingly. The Malloy chief said that the Leihou Lambu would have been very much exhausted and hungry while coming up the hills but the rice had not yet been fully boiled. He further said the Leihou



Lambu would have been very thirsty of fermented wine but the wine had not properly been fermented. Though he wanted to collect the tribute of clothes, it was not yet woven ; he had better use barks. He also said that king Loiyumba would be too weak to climb up the hills where they lived and so on.

On learning the information king Loiyumba became furious and he attacked the Leihou and Malloy villages and killed several of them ruthlessly. All their escape routes had already been sealed off earlier and people attempted to escape were captured. Finally both the chieftains of Malloy and Leihou namely Haothang Haoyen and Khomarung respectively were taken as captives.

In the Sekta expedition some Chakpas including Angkhom Tao were captured. Since then Loiyumba started singing *Ougri*. It is a song composed in verses describing the valours, duties and responsibilities of a king. Before Loiyumba it was not sung but recited by priests and scholars in the ears of king with explanations

In another expedition at Thangdapung on the northern part of the hills men resembling black monkeys were caught alive. Precious stones as claimed by those 'black people' to have magical powers were also seized. Those precious stones are believed to be stone celts brought by these black people who were of Funan origin as discussed in earlier sections. In one occasion Loiyumba had a tussle with his brother-in-law over an article.

All the nobles who were sent in different directions were all successful in their assigned duties. Thus Loiyumba crushed all the rebel tributaries and conferred honour on all those nobles.

Loiyumba introduced reforms in the administrative structure. He divided his kingdom into six *panas* or districts. The six *panas* were as follows : (1) Laipham lup, (2) Thoucha lup, (3) Kongcha lup, (4) Lupkhuba lup, (5) Ohingcha lup, and (6) Khaija lup.

Loiyumba married a girl named Sumleima a Shelloy-Langmai who lived in a very cold slope of the high hills on the northern

side where the frost began to collect before the frost of the previous year could thaw completely.

It appears from about the time of Loiyumba, Saivism became declined and the pantheon of Brahmanical religion began to be mingled up gradually with other gods and goddesses of Mongoloid origin of Tai culture. The myth of Nongpok and Panthoibi appears to have penetrated to the Poirais after Loiyumba which was a synthesis of the myth of Siva and Devi with Mongoloid pantheon. Panthoi is a Mongoloid god of Tai origin. The themes of the two myths are practically the same but in Nongpok and Panthoibi it is fully clothed with local materials and hence it became more homely to the general mass.

It is estimated that Loiyumba reigned upto about 1336 A.D.

## 21. Loitongba :

Loiyumba was succeeded by Loitongba at about 1336 A.D. Loitongba was highly honoured by the people unlike other princes. When Loitongba was in his mother's womb the *Phambul kaba* or coronation ceremony of his father Loiyumba was performed. When Loiyumba was being coronating with his queen Sumleima who was in full term of pregnancy at the time of ascending the ceremonial throne she was provided with special arrangements lest a fall from the throne, would cause an injury to the foetus that would become Loitongba. Sumleima gave birth to a son whom they gave the name Loitongba immediately on completion of the ceremony. People took him, he was the only prince who was coronated at the moment of his birth. When Loitongba was born he was most affectionately treated by his mother Sumleima as he was her child who was crowned at the moment of his birth. Both the king and the queen worshipped and prayed to god for the welfare and for the fame of their son that could rise as high as mountain.

In one occasion Loitongba went along with his nobles to the Langmai hills and plucked some *kangs* which are flat and circular seeds of creeper and they started playing it by throwing. Thus the 'Game of Kang' is said to have started from his period.

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In another occasion Loitongba sent some Poirai youths to get some tops found playing by the Bangals in the Bangal village situated on the western part of the valley. The youths brought some tops. With these tops he introduced a game of tops also.

Loitongba led an expedition at Tingbi Waikopat and Mungbi Lamthapat and captured some persons belonging to Kege and Moirang tribes. They were Khoiba Naokhomcha, Tamlu Naokhomsu and Aton Naothingba.

Loitongba married Sangleima Loinusu a girl belonging to a Nonghal tribe. It is estimated that he reigned upto about 1346 A.D.

### 22. Yoiremba .

Loitongba was succeeded by Atom Yoiremba at about 1346 A.D. The succession Yoiremba was not wanted by some of the nobles of his father. They wanted to oust him and put his younger brother Hemtou Iwanthaba on the throne. With the connivance of Nongthol Tengmai Thinba a prominent noble of his father belonging to a Khuman tribe he was ousted.

When Yoiremba was on the Poirai throne his younger brother Hemtou Iwanthaba took asylum in the Khumans who by that time inhabited on the eastern side of the Loktak lake. He was much acquainted with the Khuman girls. It is said that, in one occasion, while some Khuman girls namely Heipok Ngambi, Maningleima and Poncheng Nganbi were pounding rice on a moon lit evening singing *phousu ishei* a song sung during time of pounding, Hemtou Iwanthaba asked them to hold the pounding rod in a slanting position. The girls replied in the negative as the pounding rod was not a spear it was unnatural to do so. The girls further expressed their mistake why they did pounding in such a manner, perhaps in a fondly spirit, but Hemtou Iwanthaba took it the other sense and felt very much ashamed.

The brain behind the vicious plan to oust Atom Yoiremba was the wife of Nongthol Tengmai Thinba. She met prince Iwanthaba in a fishing ground while she was fishing with a net. She

asked the prince to come to her house secretly at night on an appointed day. On that appointed day Nongthol Tengmai Thinba heard a sound in some corners of his *ingkhoh* and suspected to be a bull or some other trespassers asked his wife to bring the spear. The wife asked him she would ascertain it first. She came out and found the prince in her courtyard and brought him in and introduced to her husband.

Thus Nongthol Tengmai Thinba became acquainted with the prince. With the presence of Nongthol Tengmai Thinba on the side of Hemtou Iwanthaba the nobles gradually shifted their allegiance to Hemtou Iwanthaba. In that situation Atom Yoiremba sent his servant Anang Piharoi to observe the situation. Anang Piharoi came and requested Atom Yoiremba to stop the attempt to crush the mounting coup d'état as all the nobles were behind his younger brother Iwanthaba. When Atom Yoiremba came to know it was the plan of Nongthol Tengmai Thinba he wanted to go to the Khumans to meet his younger brother there. Atom Yoiremba felt that there should be no two parallel kings for the throne and wanted to meet his brother. He was however persuaded by all the ladies of the palace not to go to the Khumans but he was determined to go there. Atom Yoiremba was however requested to take rest for the night by offering wine by his wife Liklang Khomhabi who belonged to a Khuman.

The next day Atom Yoiremba started his journey towards the Khumans by a boat along with his wife Liklang Khomhanbi and their son Touren Hanba. When they reached the locality of the Nongyais, one of his faithful servants there requested the king not to proceed further towards the Khumans. But Atom Yoiremba expressed him that his younger brother Hemtou Iwanthaba was becoming king and there should be no two parallel kings and that was why he was going to the Khumans. Atom Yoiremba gave the servant some drinks and proceeded towards the Khumans. When Atom Yoiremba arrived at Khuman, the Khuman king Punshiba enquired why he came to the Khumans. Atom Yoiremba replied

that it was the plan of the Khuman king which ousted him from the throne in favour of his younger brother Hemtou Iwanthaba and that he came to the Khumans for seeking his asylum. The Khuman king expressed his sincere innocence in the matter and wanted to help him. He persuaded Atom Yoiremba to go with him to meet his younger brother but Atom Yoiremba refused. Thus Atom Yoiremba spent the rest of his life in the Khumans.

It is estimated that he was about one year on the throne during the period 1346-47 A.D.

### 23 Iwanthaba .

The throne of Poirei came in the hand of Hemtou Iwanthaba by about 1347 A.D. by ousting his elder brother Hemtou Iwanthaba was formerly called Loiyamba

When Hemtou Iwanthaba was on the throne, he once went on a hunting at Irom Meijrao where he pierced through a deer with his spear. The deer ran away with the spear struck on her body and fell at Paobilok. It was discovered by the Khumans who went for fishing in that area. The deer along with the spear was given to the Khuman king. The Khuman king enquired to whom did the spear belong. Those fishermen could not identify the spear. When Yourenhanba a Khuman who was a courtier of the king saw it, he immediately recognised it. He reported to the king that the spear belonged to Hemtou Iwanthaba. The spear was assembled by him when Hemtou Iwanthaba was in the Khumans. The Khumans worshipped the goddess of grains by offering the flesh of the deer.

The information of the worship by offering the flesh of the deer killed by Hemtou Iwanthaba, was brought to the ears of Iwanthaba by the three girl friends of Hemtou Thawanthaba who were Khumans as stated in the previous section namely Heipok Ngambi, Maningleima and Poncheng Ngambi. On learning the information that the deer killed by him was used to offer to the goddess of grain Hemtou Iwanthaba was much annoyed and sent

messengers asking why his spear should be utilised in the worship. The Khumans however returned the spear. When Hemtou Iwanthaba checked his spear it was found to be very badly damaged and that too enraged him. He wanted to avenge the act which he took it as an insult.

So Hemtou Iwanthaba proceeded towards the Khumans by boats to attack them. He arrived at Uchiwa a Khuman stronghold by that period and attacked the Khumans. In that attack the Khuman queen named Leima Anganbi who was going to witness the harvest at Khachong Huilou a paddy field was hit by a *kangdel* on her head. *Kangdel* is short and heavy wooden stick specially prepared for throwing and striking a target used in warfare. Immediately after the hit Hemtou Iwanthaba rushed and beheaded the defenceless lady with his sword in a barbarous way. He carried off the head of the lady for performing the rite of *lukha thaba*. In this rite the skull is buried underneath the corpse of their tribe believing that a new child born in that family would defeat and control the tribe of the victim.

When the information of the barbarous act was received, some Khumans immediately chased Hemtou Iwanthaba. They found Hemtou Iwanthaba rowing their boats close to the other bank of the river and could not be attacked by them. Knowing the intricate situation the Khumans appealed to Hemtou Iwanthaba to return the skull of the late queen. But he refused. As their appeals failed they started abusing him, for they repented the asylum they had granted to him, for the food they had given to him, for the pity that the Khumans took for him and so on. At last the Khumans declared an open challenge to test the valour of a man condemning the cowardly act of killing a defenceless lady and asked Hemtou Iwanthaba to wait for them at Yaorou Heitupan on the fifth day for the contest.

Accordingly the Khumans arrived on the appointed day at Yaorou Heitupan and informed Hemtou Iwanthaba for their arrival. The information was given to a young woman named Leima

Nahui-nu while she was going to a field. She gave the information to Hemtou Iwanthaba. But very cunningly Hemtou Iwanthaba gave a reply that one of his nobles named Nongthol Tengmai Thinba was dead and his last rites was to be performed. Hence they would not go out for work for five days and asked the Khumans to wait for five days. In the meantime Hemtou Iwanthaba made a secret plan to ambush the Khumans. He sent several of his men which included Langmaithemba, Khamleng, Thangwai with a *lambu* in southern point at Heirangkhang, Khongoha in the elevated meadow, Haocha Lapamba in the banana plantation area and Ingel Tonpanba in Tourikon. They were advised to move towards the north to the point where the Khumans were concentrated and Hemtou Iwanthaba himself would move from the north along Waisel.

When all the parties of Hemtou Iwanthaba arrived on the spot the Khumans were found taking their lunch. Without a single moment's delay the forces of Hemtou Iwanthaba commenced attack on the Khumans. The Khumans were completely surprised by the betrayal of Hemtou Iwanthaba. Several Khumans were killed, some were captured and some escaped. One of the escapees shouted that among those killed the nephew of Hemtou Iwanthaba born by his elder brother Atom Yoiremba was there. On hearing the information Hemtou Iwanthaba ordered the Khuman Lambu to examine and verify the statement. If it is correct the skull of Tourel Khuba should not be used in the rites of *lukha thaba* after all he was his (Hemtou Iwanthaba) son (nephew). On verification the information was found to be correct. The head of late Tourel Khuba was wrapped by cloth and hung up on a tree. Thus the valour of the Khumans had little practical value even though it had romance.

Hemtou Iwanthaba married a girl named Khuroingambi belonging to a tribe which was absorbed by the Nongbals. It is estimated that he reigned upto about 1353 A.D.

#### 24. Thawanthaba :

Hiemtu Iwanthaba was succeeded by Thawanthaba. The earlier name of Thawanthaba is Sarichongba. He was a very adventurous king. He conducted a series of expeditions.

He started his expedition from Khuyon Lok lying towards the southern side of valley. In that area there was one village named Lalhang. He attacked and reduced the village to ashes by setting on fire and captured its chieftain named Maimu Payang-ngamba.

He then assaulted the Thara village lying to the south-east of the valley. In that expedition he captured Langchengpoi Apoiba the chieftain of that village.

In the hills lying to the north of the valley Thawanthaba led expedition at the Kouba Irong Yi. In that expedition he subdued Maruraba Khongsu.

He then led his expedition at Leihoupok lying to the north-west of the valley. There was a village near the Iyeibi stream. He also attacked the village. He then proceeded towards the Marong village where clash ensued with the people of Marong village. He subdued Haoba Thikpa a brave warrior of that village. He took a large quantity of fish from them. He then proceeded towards Pouwoi-ching and subdued Phuremba Kadangou. Thus he completed his north-west expeditions.

He then directed his expedition towards the south. In an encounter in the Khuman area, Thawanthaba killed Haosieba Toncheng Naomei and beheaded. He captured Yaithing Konnu the beautiful wife of Haosieba Toncheng Naomei and carried her tying on the *hirupak* meaning the flattened tail of the boat possibly for her resistance. She is believed to be the character of the historical novel 'Yaithing Konnu and Khuyon Haoba'. His expedition also continued to the Shelley-Langmais where he subdued Wahepkhong Maitang and killed one person wantonly who was found eating sour fruits with salts.



He again directed his expeditions towards the south-east near the Thoupal river. He moved to the site where once the village of Kharoi existed and came across a village named Thawa. He plundered the village and set on fire all the houses. In that village there was one girl named Kharoi Mende who decorated her hair with flowers of epiphytic orchids while weaving cloths. Possibly she was a very handsome girl and was the younger sister of Kaklen Tangsa. The girl was brought and taken her to wife by Thawanthaba.

Thawanthaba had one servant named Lampak Khangkha a stone sculptor who one day by mistake broke the fishing implements of Thawanthaba while fishing at Irong Lake. Thawanthaba was very much annoyed and probably very badly abused Lampak Khangkha. Since then Lampak Khangkha had been living in Wairung village by digging brine springs. When Thawanthaba could not see him for a long time and got the information that he was digging brine springs at Wairung lying to the east of the valley, he sent men to bring Lampak Khangkha back. The messengers informed Khangkha the desire of the king. Lampak Khangkha remembered the antecedents and gave a very cunning reply, requesting the king to attack the Wairung on the fifth day by detaining one of the messengers. On the appointed day the king and his men came to assault Wairung Lengong. In the meantime Lampak Khangkha killed the detained messenger. The king possibly took the messenger as a traitor.

It was a time when the Heirems and Khunjals gave trouble to the Khuman. The Khuman chieftain who was the son-in-law of Thawanthaba requested his father-in-law to help in crushing those Heirem-Khunjal tribes. Thawanthaba conceded the request and attacked the villages of Heirem and Khunjal and they were defeated. Thongnga Khongtek and Thonga Khongtekoha the leaders of Heirem-Khunjals were beheaded. The skull of the beheaded leaders were given to his daughter Chingkhethanbi who was given to the Khuman chief in marriage, for performing *lukha thaba* rites.

Sometime after this attack Chingtheihambi was murdered by some Khumans and Thawanthaba became very angry for the killing of his daughter. So he wanted to give a lesson to those revolting group of Khumans. He planned to send his men including Tamu Yaimacheng for provoking deliberately the revolting Khumans. In that mission two men namely Meikamba Khumiteu and Moriba Naochasa lost their lives. The result of this operation further enraged Thawanthaba. He led an expedition against the revolting Khumans and encircled them from all directions. In that action he killed several revolting Khumans leaving loyal Khumans. Thus he put down the disloyal Khumans.

Thawanthaba married Tankaingambi the daughter of Chakpram Naoda Yamba a Nongbal tribe. It is estimated that he reigned upto about 1356 A.D.

### 25. Chingthang Lanthaba

Thawanthaba was succeeded by Chingthang Lanthaba at about 1356 A.D. Chingthang Lanthaba was earlier known as Kaoba Miyomba.

Chingthang Lanthaba assaulted at Louchithong Lanthaba and defeated the tribes inhabiting that area. Since then he was known as Chingthang Lanthaba. He also subdued Chalangphamkanba a prominent Khuman. He led an expedition at Mapithel in which he reduced a village named Kamu inhabited by the Chakpas and subdued Yekoham Puleirong the chieftain of that village.

Chingthang Lanthaba married a girl named Ningthou Pokpi the daughter of Haosi Mangsa Taba a Nongbal tribe. It is estimated that he reigned upto about 1358 A.D.

### 26. Thingbai Shelhongba

Chingthang Lanthaba was succeeded by Thingbai Shelhongba at about 1358 A.D. He reigned for a very short time and there was no notable event recorded in any records so far available with us during his reign. It is said that he was born by a mother who belonged to a Khuman. It is estimated that he reigned upto about 1360 A.D.

27. **Puranthaba :**

Thingbai Shelhongba was succeeded by Puranthaba at about 1360 A.D. His former name is Ningthouhanba.

On one occasion Puranthaba heard a rumour that the Khuman king was dead due to a serious illness. He wanted to confirm it. So he sent his noble named Ateracha to the Khumans to confirm the rumour. Ateracha went to the Khumans and found the Khuman chieftain in good health. Ateracha informed the Khuman chieftain that he was sent by Puranthaba to confirm whether the Khuman chief was dead or not. The statement enraged the Khuman chieftain and explained why he had come to see him who was not dead as dead. The reply again enraged Ateracha, and Ateracha said that the Shelloy-Langmais said the Khuman chieftain was dead. Since the Khuman chieftain was a subordinate to Puranthaba, it was the reason why he sent him to verify the rumour.

The anger of the Khuman chief was now turned to the Shelloy-Langmais. The Khuman chief planned to attack the Shelloy-Langmais. Ateracha before his coming back to the Poireis tried to collect information regarding the result of his mission. He collected the information from a woman who was washing uncooked rice in a pond that the Khumans were planning to attack the Shelloy-Langmais the next morning. Ateracha returned with that information. By that time the Shelloy-Langmais became a part of the Poireis even though they maintained their distinct identity.

Puranthaba on learning the information of the plan of the Khumans arranged for a counter attack. The Khumans appeared at the scheduled hour at Poirou. The forces of Puranthaba encircled the Khumans and a severe clash ensued in which Puranthaba became victorious.

Next Puranthaba led an expedition towards the north near Kouba Let-kham-pok. In this expedition he subdued Kape Pilla and reduced Koirong village and also subdued Kouba Kontai.

Puranthaba also attacked the Thara Moiching village lying to the east of the valley. In that attack he subdued some Chakpas namely Arok Akhu, and Athing Arang who were inhabitants of Thoubal Tungsha.✓

Puranthaba married a girl named Ningthou Pokpi the daughter of Loyal Mangsa Taba and grand daughter of Haosi Mangsa Taba. It is estimated that he reigned upto about 1362 A.D.

### 28. Khumomba :

Puranthaba was succeeded by Khumomba at about 1362 A D. He was formerly known as Kaoba Miyomba.

Khumomba led an expedition at Lishinglok lying to the south of the valley where he lost some of his brave men. They were Miwongkhuba, Miwonghanba, Mathamhanba and Mathamkhuba.

In earlier expedition towards the north on the Hembra ranges he attacked the Thangal village and captured Maimuba Senloiba the chief of Chingsong.

It is said that Lamyai Koiren Lanthabi the daughter of Khumomba, who was married to the Khumans sent a messenger named Chumbrengba belonging to a Khuman to her father requesting him to punish the Kabows. The Khuman principality was going to be shattered to pieces by different forces. The Kabows with their skilled Pong warriors set up their camp at Phenchikop. A portion of land belonging to the Khumans was demanded by the Kabuis to be used as a passage for their cattle. A portion of their land was also claimed by the Chairens to be theirs. They wanted to use the land of the Khumans as their burial ground.

On learning the information Khumomba prepared an attack and proceeded towards Phenchikop. In that clash the combined forces of the Khumans and Poireis reduced the Pong warriors and captured several of them alive.

In this encounter the Pong warriors used mainly bows and arrows. On the other hand the Poireis used swords and spears and

also deployed ponies. Because of this superiority of weaponry the Poireis easily subdued them. After the clash Khumomba stayed for some time in the Khumans where he married Maningleima Poncheng Nganbi the daughter of Khuramba Loicha Ngabma as his second wife. Khumomba also married Yanglei Ngambi also called Tanabi a Khuman. It is estimated that he reigned upto about 1370 A D.

### 29. Moiramba

Khumomba was succeeded by Moiramba at about 1370 A D. Moiramba was earlier known as Khuuma Layanba. He had a clash with the Khumans at Leitang Yumoikon and captured Thangchi Naokhong and his wife. He had also another clash with the Moirangs at Ningthoukhong. In this clash he captured Wapa Naocha and 'Tilhouthaba belonging to a Kege tribe. Moiramba led an expedition at Theichep village in Maku Abilok lying to the north-west on the bank of the Maku river. In this expedition Moiramba subdued Haotrak the chief of the village and another one brave warrior named Korirong.

Moiramba married Khuman Khombi belonging to a Nongbal tribe. It is estimated that he reigned upto about 1381 A.D.

### 30. Thangbi Lanthaba .

Moiramba was succeeded by his son Thangbi Lanthaba at about 1381 A.D. Thangbi Lanthaba was perhaps the only son of his mother or parents and he had neither half brothers nor half sisters. Hence he was called 'Yoiien Tompok-pa' by his mother meaning 'prince-precious-born-alone'.

He led an expedition on the eastern hills where he had a clash with the Marings. He subdued the Marings and captured Haonu Leihoubi, Leihouba, Khamlang Lanthongyang.

Thangbi Lanthaba learnt that there was a beautiful princess of Moirang born by the younger brother of the Moirang king Lai Ching-khu Telheiba. The Moirang king had no issue and his younger

brother too had the princess as his only child. So the princess was the only child of the royal family. As the princess was also born all alone she was also given the name 'Yoiren Tompok-pi' with the suffix '-pi'.

Thangbi Lanthaba wanted to marry her and sent his nobles namely Wangkhei Louremba and Lamlang Leiton to the king of Moirang with the request for the hand of the princess. The two nobles came to Moirang and expressed the desire of Thangbi Lanthaba and the strange happening of identical names of the Poirei prince and the Moirang princess. The Moirang king Lai-Chingkhu gave an evasive answer that he had neither a son nor a daughter. He had no daughter called Yoiren Tompok-pi. The negotiation at the start came to a deadlock. The two nobles had no other alternative but to retreat. So they started for Poirei. In the meantime princess Yoiren Tompok-pi who secretly had heard the negotiation between her uncle king and the nobles of Poirei and on seeing the negotiation failed she planned some other alternative way. She was found awaiting secretly near a bush on the way of the two nobles. She halted them and expressed that the misunderstanding was due to non-acquaintance of the Poirei prince and her uncle king. The princess further said that for the sake of Prince Yoiren Tompok-pa she would be waiting there, and requested the prince to invade Moirang on the fifth day by a secret route which she explained to the two nobles in details.

The two nobles came back to the Poireis and reported all the happenings. Thangbi Lanthaba accordingly planned to invade Moirang. On the fifth day Thangbi Lanthaba moved to Moirang by boats and proceeded along the route as directed by princess Yoiren Tompok-pi. The route was full of tall weeds and no one could detect the presence of somebody there. In such a situation one Karong Yumlembam was found and he became panicky and appealed for mercy as he was only a common labourer toiling for his life. Thangbi Lanthaba took pity on him and his life was spared. Thangbi Lanthaba defeated the Moirangs in that surprise attack and thus he got princess Yoiren Tompok-pi.

It may be mentioned here that the mini-romantic epic 'Khamba-Thoibi' was developed from the life sketch of princess Yoizen Tompok-pi after her death. It is a historical novel.

After the Moirang expedition, Thangbi Lanthaba led an expedition towards north-west on Sekmai hills. In this expedition he captured Tengkhonbi.

The first queen of Thangbi Lanthaba was Yaosombi the daughter of Leitang Lanthaba who belonged to a Nonghal tribe. It is estimated that he reigned upto about 1391 A.D. *V. P.*

### 31. Kongyamba :

Thangbi Lanthaba was succeeded by Kongyamba also pronounced as Kongyangba at about 1391 A.D. He was known as Sanahongba before he was called Kongyamba. He led an expedition at Kongyangphai. The location of Kongyangphai is believed to be somewhere between Hengtam village the southernmost village of present Manipur and Champhai in present Mizoram. The area of Kongyangphai is stated to be neither a plain nor high hills, that is, a penplain. In this expedition he subdued the descendants of Konggoiba the chieftain of that village. Since then he was called Kongyangba.

He then led another expedition on the Ingel Ching also known as Hingel Ching lying on the north-west where at one time Hongnem the Luwang chief settled. In that expedition they had to fight with the Mayangs who possibly entered present political Manipur from the north-western side. The Mayangs were defeated and some of them were captured alive. The captives were Aphe Raja the physician, Tingku Raja, Lamkasumka Tao, Aring Arang Tao etc. Most of the inhabitants of the village were brought down to the valley and absorbed by the Poireis.

Kongyamba led another expedition in the area of present Lamangdong which was formerly called Lamlangtong. In that expedition he caught a Chakpa widow named Miyana Saphabi possibly a very handsome woman in a house that was situated in a

secluded place. Most of the inhabitants of this area belonged to the speakers of *lonthei* meaning deviated language.

Kongyamba married a girl named Khamba Phabi who belonged to the family of Puranthaba a Nongbal tribe. It is estimated that he reigned upto about 1398 A D

### 32. Telheiba .

Kongyangba was succeeded by Telheiba at about 1398 A.D. Telheiba was physically a very strong man and was also a good archer.

Telheiba led an expedition in the area of Poubikhong Chairon Theichangbung and subdued Konkhunao and Hannu Konthongngai. On his return journey after halting one night he attacked the Heirem village mainly inhabited by the Khunjals. The name of the Khunjal chieftain was Chenglei Lanthaba. The village was located on a very beautiful place. He captured that village and took Khamlang Taobi the younger sister of Therelongba a Khunjal to wife.

In another expedition in the area of the Koubru ranges, he set on fire the Saipu village and subdued Samlangba the brave leader of that village. They belonged to the Marem tribes

Telheiba married a girl named Sanarembi belonging to a Nongbal tribe. It is estimated that he reigned upto about 1401 A.D.

### 33. Tonaba :

Telheiba was succeeded by Tonaba at about 1401 A D. No record is available except that Tonaba succeeded Telheiba and reigned for a very short period. It is estimated that he reigned for some two or three years, upto about 1403 A.D.

### 44. Tabungba :

Tonaba was succeeded by Tabungba at about 1403 A.D. Tabungba led an expedition in the area of Yangphang Chaklikpok and had a fight with the Marems and he subdued their leader Songlu Keipha.



He led another expedition towards the north in the Chingshong area which was covered by dense forest. He wanted to raise taxes on the people of Marem Khunbung. While moving to Marem Khunbung he halted at Chingshong in his loyal chief's house. It is said that while he was halting at Chingshong, he had an affair with Larala Sang-nu Saphabi a beautiful wife of the Chingshong chief, named Khamlangba. He did not proceed further, but after staying for some more days he returned home.

In the meantime the Chingshong chieftain was not happy at all because of the affair of his wife and king Tabungba. Khamlangba politically organised all the tribes inhabiting the area to revolt against king Tabungba though he pretended loyal. He also planned to approach the king by the chiefs of Marem and Thingba villages namely Chinggouba and Waikakpa respectively. The two chiefs reported to the king that all the tribes living that area decided not to pay taxes and further also reports that Thingkhongba the servant of the Chingshong chieftain who went to collect taxes returned without any tax.

After sometime the Chingshong chieftain himself came to the king and prayed for an immediate action against those revolting and disintegrating tribes. The king agreed and came to the hills to crush the revolting tribes. When the king arrived at Chingshong, Larala Sang-nu Shaphabi requested the king not to proceed further and take rest in their house. She said she had been preparing meat and freshly fermented wine for the dinner. The king agreed and halted the night in the house of Larala Sang-nu Saphabi. In the evening quite foolishly Akangjam Tonkhinba without knowing the strength and strategy assaulted some of the revolting tribes with only a few of his men where he was killed in the action.

King Tabungba had some apprehensions and suspected some foul play and prepared for an assault the next morning to revenge the killing of his noble. The king sent messenger to his queen Lamphel Ngambi that he was determined to revenge the killing

of his noble and in case he failed he would not return alive. If he was killed in the action he asked his queen to revenge the killing of their father by the sons left to her.

Tabungba was murdered on the very night in the house of Khamlangba.

Tabungba married Lampel Ngambi belonging to a prominent family of the Nongbal tribe. It is estimated that he reigned upto about 1415 A. D.

### 35. Loiremba :

Tabungba was succeeded by Loiremba at about 1415 A.D. Except that he reigned for a short period succeeding king Tabungba, no record is available about his activities and his family.

### 36. Panshiba :

After a spell of about three years of vacant throne following the death of Loiremba, the throne was occupied by Panshiba at about 1418 A. D. He was also known as Cheikan Thekpa Nuyam Phaba.

He led an expedition at Meirang Kamutak. In this expedition he captured a number of women working in the manufacture of salt by boiling brine. Since then he became known as *Nuyam Phaba* meaning 'captor of many women'.

He then assaulted at Patsoi Lamhar and subdued Kotail Heiba Haokhongsu. He also assaulted the Tangkhul Manthou village. In this assault he subdued Tangkhul Keihouningthou and Marem Khamting. He proceeded his assaults towards the north and attacked the Keinesg village. In this assault he captured Chairoung Leipunglong and Thangsaba Utong Ahangba.

In another expedition in the area of Ngangoi Thetloupung of the Kaga, he subdued Chaoba Waikhuan.

Panshiba married Lambasa the daughter of Arampamba a Nongbal tribe. It is estimated that he reigned upto about 1427 A.D.

37. **Ningthoukhomba :**

Punshiba was succeeded by Ningthoukhomba at about 1437 A.D. His earlier name is Khoimou Laimingnaba Charairongba.

Ningthoukhomba who was desirous of marrying ladies of Kege-Moirang, one day went to the house of Amutaram a Khuman sheltering in the Kege area of the Loktak lake where Haotomba a Kege tribe lived. While coming to the house of Kege Haotomba. Ningthoukhomba carried a sword and kept somewhere. It is said that the wife of the host searched for the sword but instead she found only ants. Ningthoukhomba had a secret meeting with his nobles named Tongyaihanba, Mukhurek Kamu, Amutaram and Konkhang Laichouba. The last named person was the officer-in charge of Senbi-Kabow. He usually lived in the Senbi-Kabows being a *lambu* of that principality. Ningthoukhomba advised them to kidnap the wife of the Senbi-Kabow chief who was living with proper protections. The nobles of Ningthoukhomba moved in dead of night in the Senbi-Kabow village after finishing their packed dinner near the village. With the guide of Konkhang Laichouba the *lambu* of Senbi Kabow they entered the house of the chief of Senbi-Kabow. In their attempt to kidnap the lady she offered resistances, as a result they killed the lady and then beheaded. They carried the sabred head and returned hurriedly to Poirei on that very night.

When the news of the barbarous killing was heard the whole Senbi-Kabow became furious. The furious Senbi-Kabow chief caught Konkhang Laichouba the *lambu* and charged him of complicity in the heinous crime committed by the Poirei-Meiteis and as a revenge he was to be beheaded as he was the officer-in-charge of the Poireis stationed in Senbi-Kabow. Konkhang Laichouba appealed to stop the execution for a moment till he completed his statement. The Senbi-Kabow chieftain agreed. Konkhang Laichouba said, as the crime was committed at dead of night the criminals should have taken their dinner from a packed food somewhere near the Senbi-Kabow village. It could be easily ascertained from the

materials which packed their food the tribe which committed the crime. If it was the Moirang it should have been packed by lotus leaves, if it was packed by Leihouras it was the Nongyais. It was therefore better to confirm the packing materials first and ascertain the tribe. The Senbi-Kabow agreed the argument and immediately sent to examine the packing materials left by them. They found the packing materials were lotus leaves. So the Senbi-Kabow chief took the crime was committed by the Moirangs. He also appealed for help to the Poireis in attacking the Moirangs and gave a sabred portion of *melei* an epiphytic orchid flower to Konkhang Laichouba requesting the king of Poirei to attack Moirang when the flower bloomed the next season.

When the season came the *melei* flower began to bloom, the Senbi-Kabow commenced the attack of Moirang. As agreed upon the Poireis also commenced their attack of the Moirangs when the *melei* began to bloom. By that period Moirang was the most powerful principality next to Poirei. They were flourishing in art and literature. Moirang had a compact area comprising seven villages or Leikais. They were (1) Khuyon Seklou, (2) Tunglou, (3) Nganglou Ngangkha, (4) Okchu Lakhong, (5) Khoinaingampu Ura, (6) Laihu Yaoshu and (7) Khunjou Hikha. In this clash with Poirei-Senbi-Kabow led by Ningthoukhomba several villages were plundered and set on fire. Several top leaders of those areas including Khoiba Rasika and Leitang Lanthaba both belonged to the Kege-Moirang were captured. He also captured Tumulakpa who belonged to the Senbi tribe. Besides these top leaders they also captured Sanarakki Ponchomba, Teparakki Kapukhomba, Kegerakki Tilhouthaba, Wapu Naoja, Athing Arancha, Ura Langmeiremba, Khenchanglemba, Kenchang Khoiba and Macha Phaba.

In another occasion Ningthoukhomba led an expedition on the eastern side of Akla in the year 1443 A.D. In that expedition most of the Senbi-Kabow warriors were killed and he subdued Yanggoi the chieftain of Akla, and took Khairong Mandang Lakpaan

important person along with Chengchaki, Chengchakang, Khekohari and Khechakang as captives.

While Ningthoukhomba was engaged in the Akla expedition, the Tangkhuls from Chingshong attacked the Poireis. As the king was on an expedition there was little force to face the Tangkhul rebels. The queen Leima Linthoingambi who was in charge of the administration faced the Tangkhul rebels very tactically. She did not use force but treated them with the same earlier relations. Whenever the Tangkhul subordinates came to see the king, they were warmly received. She said to the Tangkhul rebels, as the king was not in the palace there was no need to kill women and children and asked them to take rest. She gave them good food and strong wine. When the Tangkhul rebels were fully drunk they all were arrested.

Immediately after the Tangkhul rebellion most people of the palace were shifted to Tangkham a village lying to the south of the palace. While Ningthoukhomba was on the Akla expedition, Leuna Linthoingambi gave birth to a prince who was later named Kiyamba in the year 1443 A D. Leima Linthoingambi was the daughter of Senkhuphaba a Nongbal tribe living on the eastern side of the Imphal river. Ningthoukhomba died in the year 1467 A D.

## INDO-ARYAN BRAHMINS AND THEIR SAGEI ALLOTMENTS

Some Indo-Aryan Brahmins came and settled on this land since the latter half of the 15th century A.D. Most of them got mixed with the earlier population but from about 1467 A.D. we have some records of Brahmins who settled on this land. The Brahmins who settled from about the above date were allotted *Yumnak* or *Sagei* that is, family title. Some available *sageis* from *Bamon Khunthoklon* an account dealing with the Brahmin immigrants are given below, even though the authenticity of the account has not yet properly been examined.

*Brahmins arriving during the period 1467 A.D to 1508 A.D.*

(1) One Brahmin named Subhi Narayan came from Tripura area ( the name Tripura was non-existent by this period ) and settled on this land. He came without family He married a girl named Thoinu who belonged to a Haokei tribe. He was allotted the family title *Phurailatpam*.

(2) One Brahmin named Misi Pitambar also came from Tripura without family and settled on this land. He married a girl named Hongbi who belonged to a Ngapurum Hao tribe. The Sagei allotted to his family was *Pitambar-cheithaba-mayum*.

(4) One Brahmin named Sri Raidhar came from Gujerat with family. The name of his wife was Heraini. He was accompanied by one brother. He was allotted *Sri-mayum* as his Sagei.

(5) One Brahmin named Sarangi came from Nepal side. He married a girl named Kumbi of Mayang Heikhong He was allotted the family title *Gotimayum*

(6) One *doom* (fisherman) named Patnigiri Gangaram came from Tripura side and married a girl named Maiwubi from Sekta.

He was allotted the family title *Sijagrumayum* (It is believed he came under the guise of a Brahmin and later his true identity was discovered).

(7) One Brahmin named Dhanaran Tantradar came from Tripura side and married a girl named Kumw of Mayang Heikhong. He was allotted the family title *Kabchimgbam*.

(8) One Brahmin named Rangacharan came from Upper Assam side and married a girl named Tingbi. He was allotted the family title *Adhikarimayum*.

(9) One Brahmin named Sitaram who came from Nadia married a girl named Maipakpi of Langnung. He was allotted the family title *Sitram-mayum*.

(10) One Brahmin named Tenna who came from Nadia married a girl named Sumsenbi of Kumbi. He was allotted the family title *Buchkaspati-mayum*. It is said that he was a *sanjuki* meaning 'son of a monk'.

(11) One Brahmin named Jabasing came from Tripura side and married Dhani of Perekhongba family. He was allotted the family title *Leikkuncha gbam*.

(12) One Brahmin named Bhanjem who came from Nadia was given the family title *Bhanje'-mayum*. He left no issue.

(13) One Brahmin named Raghunathdas who came from Tripura side married a girl named Chaobi of Shamupan. He was allotted the family title *Sanjuki-mayum*. It is stated that he was a son of a monk.

(14) One Brahmin named Haridev who came from Tripura side married a girl named Shamphabi of Kumbi. He was allotted the family title *Dhyandas-mayum*. It is stated that he was a son of a monk.

(15) One Brahmin named Vidyalankar who came from Tripura side married a girl named Mafmubi of Tangbam. He was allotted the family title *Takhen-changbam*.

(16) One Brahmin named Ganeshgiri who came from Tripura side married a girl named Haobi of Mayang Toubul. He was allotted the family title *Leihao-thabam*. It is said that he was a son of a monk.

(17) One Brahmin named Damodar came from Kanpur. He joined the family of *Leihao-thabam*.

(18) One Brahmin named Paramananda who came from Sylhet, Kulingram joined the family of *Kakchingtabam*.

*Brahmins who came during the period 1523-24 A.D.*

(19) One un-named Brahmin who came with a pitcher of wine and married a girl named Loita of Khurkhul. He was allotted the family title *Hidang-mayum Kharung-tabam*.

(20) One Brahmin named Gonok Maniram came to this land. He married a girl named Ngoubi of Haochongpan. He was allotted the family title *Arambam*. (It may be stated that the family title *Arambam* became at a later period a non-Brahmin family)

*Brahmins who came during the period 1545-62 A.D.*

(21) One Brahmin named Govindagiri came and married a Pan girl. He was allotted the family *Chandrashyam-mayum*. He came from Gour Desh.

(22) One Brahmin named Krishna Charan Tiwari came from Kanpur and settled here. He was allotted the family title *Khurai-taba Kanouji-mayum*.

(23) One Brahmin named Kalambar who came from Gour Desh with his wife gave birth to two sons Raghunath and Nath. Raghunath married three girls namely Ningol Lakpi, Porasi a Kabow girl and Saikhom Chinta. Raghunath and Gonok Thengra were friends. When the wife of Gonok Thengra died he married Chinta the youngest wife of Raghunath. By that time Chinta had already conceived a child of about three months. Chinta gave birth to two sons. Both of them were allotted the family title *Gurumayum*.



*Brahmins who came during the period 1562-97 A.D.*

(24) One Brahmin who came from Shantipur was allotted the family title *Loupuk-tabam*.

*Brahmins who came during the period 1597-1652 A.D.*

↳ (25) One very thin Brahmin who came from Gaur Desh married a girl named Heri of Khetri-Sanjimayum. He was allotted the family title *Kongbrai-latpam*.

(26) One Brahmin named Jayaram brother of Jugi who came from Gaur Desh joined the family of *Kongbrai-latpam*.

↳ (27) One Brahmin who came from Calcutta side (West Bengal) named Shri Nath married a girl of Yaranpat. He was allotted the family title *Samulas-latpam*.

(28) One Brahmin named Brajananda who came from Calcutta (West Bengal) area married a girl named Tainajam Hongbi of Charangpat. He was allotted the family title *Vishnu-latpam*.

(29) One Brahmin named Panipath who came from Ghosalpara of Assam married a girl named Pini of Kakching. He was allotted the family title *Hidzng-mayum*.

↳ (30) One Brahmin named Achabya who came from Kuligram (in Assam) was allotted the family title *Sanglakpam*.

(31) Another Brahmin named Panipath who came from Ghosalpara of Assam was allotted the family title *Thongkhatabam*.

↳ (32) One Brahmin named Maninath who came from Ghosalpara of Baranagar was allotted the family title *Sagolban-taba Aribam-Vishnulatpam*.

(33) One Brahmin named Adinath who came from Ghosalpara of Baranagar was allotted the family title *Aribam Tampak-lai-latpam* and began to live in Brahmapur.

(34) One Brahmin named Aditanath who came from Ghosalpara of Baranagar was allotted the family title *Aribam Sagol-latpam*. They began to settle at Brahmapur.

*Brahmins who came during the period 1666-97 A.D.*

(35) One Brahmin named Brahmchari Vishnuram who came from Prayag married a girl named Punni who belonged to Mayang Heirok. He was allotted the family title *Brahmachari-mayum*.

(36) One Brahmchari Chakrabarti came along with his wife. He was allowed to join the *Brahmachari-mayum*,

(37) One Brahmin named Jai Krishna from Kugudhagad married a girl who lived at Leisangkhang. He was given the family title *Heitakshi-mayum*.

(38) Two Brahmin brothers named Gonok Subol and Gonok Balaram came from Tripura. Subol married a girl from Thinunggei. She gave birth to a son whom they gave the name Kongyamba. Kongyamba married a girl belonging to a Nongmaithem family and gave birth to a son. When Kongyamba died his widow was married to another Brahmin family. She was married to Khuiba of Sijagurumayum and adopted the child left by her former husband. The boy was named Megharaj. He was absorbed in the Sijagurumayum family.

Gonok Balaram married a girl named Mubi who held from Lansonbi. She gave birth to a son named Premananda. Premananda married a girl belonging to a Bachhaspati-mayum family. He left a male issue. His widow was re-married to another Brahmin belonging to Aribam Sagol-lailatpam family and adopted the child also. The descendants of the child were merged in the family of Aribam.

(39) One Brahmin named Mukunda who came from Gujerat was merged in the Bachhaspati-Mayum family.

(40) One *dhobi* (washer-man) named Motiram who came to this land was absorbed in the family of *Lailatpa Gurumayum* who settled in Brahmapur.

*Brahmins who came during the period 1697-1709 A.D.*

(41) One Brahmin named Nishiram who came from Tripura along with a Hindu idol married Maipakpi who lived at Ahongei.

He was given the family title *Laipubam*. It is said he was the son of a monk.

(42) One Brahmin named Jabatguru who came to this land married a girl named Situ who belonged to a Phayeng tribe. He was allowed to be absorbed in the Laipubam family line.

(43) One Brahmin named Bichitrapuri who came from Jaganath Puri married a girl named Khonggonbi. He was given the family title *Hangoibam*.

(44) One Brahmin named Bimal who came from Mathura married a Muslim girl named Taya and gave birth to a son named Kharba. He was absorbed in the Hangoibam family.

(45) One Brahmin named Manohardas who came from Nadia married a girl named Maitekpi who belonged to a Sopy Hao tribe. He was allotted the family title *Manohar-mayum*. It is said that he was a son of a monk.

(46) One Brahmin who came to settle on this land married a girl named Chaobi who held from Ahongei. He was allotted the family title *Jopal-Hanjaba-mayum*.

(47) One Brahmin named Banamali who was a Panda came along with his wife. He was absorbed in the Guru Aribam family.

(48) One Brahmin named Gangaram who came from Tripura married a girl named Maimu. He was absorbed in the Laimayum family.

(49) One Brahmin named Sisupal who came from Tripura married a girl named Mubi who belonged to a Mayang tribe. He was absorbed in the Laimayum family.

(50) One Brahmin named Misri Jagadiswar who came from Tripura married a girl named Maichoubi who held from Langnung. He was given the family title *Choudhuri-mayum*.

(51) Three Brahmins named Surat, Dasarath and Udhab came from Tripura. Surat and Dasarath were absorbed in the Gonok family line. Udhab married a girl named Ngoubi of Hao-chongpan. Udhab was absorbed in the Laimayum family line.

(52) <sup>✓</sup> One Brahmin named Manu Sanjuki who came from Orissa married a girl named Maichoubi of Keikhu Hao. He was absorbed in the Samulailatpam family line.

*Brahmin who came during the period 1709-48 A.D.*

(54) One Brahmin named Surpananda who came to settle on this land married a girl belonging to a Salam family. He was absorbed in the Hanjaba-mayum family line.

(55) One Brahmin monk named Shantidas who came from Sylhet married one princess of Pamheiba. He left no issue.

(55) One Brahmin named Malomdas who accompanied Shantidas married a girl named Haobi belonging to a Kaikhu Hao tribe. He was absorbed in the Sanjuki-mayum family line.

(57) One Brahmin named Ramadas who came to settle here married a Kabui girl. He was also absorbed in the Sanjuki-mayum family line.

(58) Two Brahmin brothers named Shyam Bairagi Nandi and Ban Thakur who came to settle on this land married girls of Kei. They were absorbed in the Sanjuki-mayum family line.

(59) One <sup>✓</sup> Brahmin named Nakha Kana who came here married girl named Konbi who belonged to a Maring tribe. He was allotted the family title *Tinkhab-mayum*.

(60) One Brahmin named Premananda who came to this land married a girl named Sati who belonged to a Tripuri origin. He was absorbed in the Hanjaba-mayum family line.

(61) <sup>✓</sup> One Brahmin astrologer named Anidras who came to settle on this land married a girl named Mungbi who held from Hayel. His descendants were absorbed in two family lines namely *Gopri-Hanjaba-mayum* and *Hazari-mayum*.

(62) One Brahmin named Judram who came from Sunarandi, Assam, was absorbed in the *Hidang-mayum* family line.

(63) One Brahmin named Shekharananda Tiwari who came from Kainyakuj was given the family title *Uripok-taba Anoubam*.

*Brahmins who came during the period 1763-98 A.D.*

(64) One Brahmin named Jai came from Tripura. He was allotted the family title *Waba Hanjoba-mayum*.

(65) One Brahmin named Judram who came Bentala, Assam, was allotted the family title *Warilibam-mayum*.

*Brahmins who came during the period 1825-34 A.D*

(66) One Brahmin came from Brindaban named Ramdhila. The family to which he was absorbed is not given.

(67) One Brahmin named Madhabrai came from Mathura. The family title to which he was absorbed is not given.

(68) One Brahmin who came from Cachar is also found to have not mentioned the family title to which he was absorbed.

(69) One Brahmin named Lakshikanta who came from Dacca was allotted the family title *Acharya-mayum* of Lalhalpung.

(70) One Brahmin named Naradhan who came from Agartala, Tripura, was allotted the family title *Anoubam* of Thangmeiband Pankha.

(71) One Brahmin named Gambhir was absorbed in the *Anoubam* of Thangmeiband Taba

*Brahmins who came during the period 1835-91 A.D.*

✓(72) One Brahmin who came from Raibeni was allotted the family title *Brajabasi-mayum* of Yelangbam Leikai Taba.

(73) One Brahmin named Chandra Goswami who came from Shantipur married a Brahmin girl named Leima of Adhikari-mayum family. He was allotted the family title *Gojrakri-mayum*.

(74) One Brahmin named Shyama Sananbiya who came from Radhakunda (Mathura) was allotted the family title *Radhakunda-basi-mayum* of Uripok Taba.

## FAMILY TITLE OR SAGEI WITH YEK-SALAI AND GOTRA OF GENERAL MEITEI

Sl. No. Family title or Sagei	Mangang Salai, Shandilya Gotra	Luwang Salai, Kalayape Gotra	Khunan Salai, Moudgalya and Mandalya Gotras	Angom Salai, Goutama and Kousika Gotras	Moirang Salai, Atreya and Aangirasa Gotras	Kha-Ngaobe Salai, Bhara- dwa and Naimis Gotras	Sarang-Leishangthem Sa- lai, Pasistha and Angirasa Gotras
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
1. Abujam	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
2. Achom	—	—	F	F	—	—	—
3. Achoibam	—	F	—	F	—	—	—
4. Achubam	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
5. Achuwam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
6. Aheibam	F	—	F	—	F	F	F
7. Aheibam Laiphrakpam	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
8. Aheibam Moiranghanbam	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
9. Aheibam Taobam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
10. Aheibam Thongam	—	—	—	—	—	F	—
11. Ahongbam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
12. Ahongsangbam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
13. Ahanthem	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
14. Akhom	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
15. Akhongbam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
16. Akangjam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
17. Akhuwam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
18. Akoowam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—

F—Falls in.

Sl. No.	Family title or Sagei	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
19.	Akoijam	—	—	—	F	—	—	F
20.	Akharam	—	—	F	—	F	—	—
21.	Akham	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
22.	Akhanbam	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
23.	Akaram-Konsam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
24.	Akuram	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
25.	Akhaibam	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
26.	Ahanbam Laiphrakpam	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
27.	Amom Aheibam	—	—	—	—	—	—	F
28.	Angom	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
29.	Angom Yumkhaibam	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
30.	Angom Nongthombam	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
31.	Angomjambam	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
32.	Amakoham	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
33.	Aphram	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
34.	Arengbam	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
35.	Arambam	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
36.	Arubam	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
37.	Ashangbam	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
38.	Ashangwangbam	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
39.	Ashom	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
40.	Ashem	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
41.	Asheibahanbam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
42.	Athokpam	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
43.	Atom	F	—	F	—	—	—	—
44.	Apangmayum	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
45.	Ayam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
46.	Ayekpam	F	F	—	—	—	F	—
47.	Ayengbam	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
48.	Chabungbam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
49.	Charoibam	F	—	F	—	—	—	—
50.	Chanambam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—



Sl. No.	Family title or Sagei	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
51.	Chanam	F	—	—	F	—	—	F
52.	Channabam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
53.	Chandam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
54.	Changgamayum	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
55.	Chinggangbam	—	F	—	F	—	—	—
56.	Charaimayum	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
57.	Changninghanbam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
58.	Chakpram	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
59.	Chakpram Manglem	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
60.	Chakpaphiam	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
61.	Chakpamuyum	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
62.	Chengleipam	—	—	—	—	—	—	F
63.	Chengleijam	—	—	—	—	—	F	—
64.	Changningsenbam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
65.	Chongtham	—	F	F	F	F	F	F
66.	Chongtham Santhong	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
67.	Chongtham Ningthoujam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
68.	Chonjoubam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
69.	Chirom	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
70.	Chingjabam	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
71.	Chingngakham	—	—	—	—	—	—	F
72.	Chingsubam	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
73.	Chingkhubam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
74.	Chingtham	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
75.	Chingkham	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
76.	Chungkham	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
77.	Haobam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
78.	Haobijam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
79.	Haorongbam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
80.	Haorongam	—	F	F	—	—	—	—
81.	Haodeijam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
82.	Haokhom	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
83.	Haorekham	—	—	—	—	—	—	F

Sl. No.	Family title or Sagei	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
84.	Haiheibam	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
85.	Halbam	—	—	F	—	—	—	F
86.	Haobajam	—	—	—	—	—	F	—
87.	Haoibam	—	—	F	—	F	—	—
88.	Hakwanthem	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
89.	Hanjabam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
90.	Hawaibam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
91.	Hirrom	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
92.	Hijam	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
93.	Hidam	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
94.	Hitam	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
95.	Hikhambam	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
96.	Hinaosabam	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
97.	Hemnam	F	—	—	F	—	—	F
98.	Hentakpam	—	—	F	—	—	F	—
99.	Hentakpam Yensenbam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
100.	Hengakpam	—	—	F	—	—	F	—
101.	Hemoibam	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
102.	Herom	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
103.	Hodam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
104.	Hodam Ngatham	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
105.	Hongnemsungbam	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
106.	Heisnam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
107.	Heirangkhookham	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
108.	Heirong Leishangthem	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
109.	Heikrujam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
110.	Heirom	F	—	—	F	—	—	—
111.	Heibam	—	—	—	—	—	—	F
112.	Heirangkhongjam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
113.	Heibithabam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
114.	Heitham	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
115.	Heikhham	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
116.	Heikam	—	F	—	—	—	—	—

Sl. No.	Family title or Sagei	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
117.	Heiwam	—	—	—	F	—	—	F
118.	Huirem	F	—	—	F	—	—	—
119.	Huidrom	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
120.	Huirongbam	F	F	—	—	—	—	—
121.	Huiyam	—	—	F	—	—	—	F
122.	Hayingthem	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
123.	Hanglem	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
124.	Ikudum	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
125.	Ikheisangbam	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
126.	Ipusangbam	F	F	—	—	—	—	—
127.	Irungbam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
128.	Irumbam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
129.	Irom	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
130.	Irom Sinam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
131.	Ikhoisangbam	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
132.	Ichom	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
133.	Irengbam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
134.	Ingngutum	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
135.	Ingngudam	—	—	F	—	—	F	—
136.	Ikwanthem	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
137.	Iwangbam	—	—	—	—	—	F	—
138.	Kangbam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
139.	Kangsabam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
140.	Kangsenbam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
141.	Kanglenjam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
142.	Kambam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
143.	Kadam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
144.	Karam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
145.	Kabrambam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
146.	Karaobam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
147.	Kanjem	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
148.	Kasubam	—	—	—	F	—	—	—

Sl. No.	Family title or Sagei	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
140.	Kaambam	—	—	—	F	—	—	F
150.	Kambaam	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
151.	Kapajam	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
152.	Kabajam	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
153.	Kaborambam	—	—	—	—	F	F	—
154.	Kairenjam	—	—	—	—	F	F	—
155.	Kakyanpaibam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
156.	Kasnam	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
157.	Kambongmayum	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
158.	Kangjam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
159.	Kiyam	—	—	F	F	F	—	—
160.	Kumabam	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
161.	Kumam	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
162.	Keithellakpam	F	—	—	—	F	—	—
163.	Keirelsangbam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
164.	Keisam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
165.	Keithelpal Tabamayum	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
166.	Keikrenpam	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
167.	Keikombam	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
168.	Keikrambam	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
169.	Keithellakpam (Moirang Sanarungbam)	F	—	—	F	—	—	—
170.	Kongbam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
171.	Kongpam	F	—	—	F	—	—	—
172.	Kongpajam	F	F	—	—	—	—	—
173.	<u>Konsam</u>	F	—	F	F	F	—	F
174.	Kolom	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
175.	Kongkam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
176.	Konjengbam	—	—	—	F	F	F	F
177.	Kongkhuwam	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
178.	Kongkham	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
179.	Koirenjam	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
180.	Konthoujam	—	—	—	—	—	F	F

Sl. No.	Family title or Sagei	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
181.	Konthoujam Meinam	—	—	—	—	—	—	F
182.	Konjengbam Haorokcham	—	—	—	—	—	—	F
183.	Koijam	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
184.	Kontha Haobam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
185.	Konheibam	—	—	—	—	—	F	—
186.	Kokham	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
187.	Koujengbam	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
188.	Khwairakpam	F	—	—	—	F	—	—
189.	Khamnam	F	—	F	—	—	F	—
190.	Khamlangbasangbam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
191.	Khanachaobam	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
192.	Khachengbam	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
193.	Khangenbam	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
194.	Khaidem	—	—	—	—	—	F	—
195.	Khangjirakpam (Khangsarakpam)	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
196.	Kharibam	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
197.	Kharaijam	—	—	—	—	—	—	F
198.	Khagokpam	—	—	—	F	—	—	F
199.	Khathangbam	—	—	—	—	—	F	—
200.	Khakhuirakpam	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
201.	Khundrakpam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
202.	Khuntom (Khundom)	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
203.	Khunjahunbam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
204.	Khumanlambam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
205.	Khurairakpam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
206.	Khuriyenbam	F	—	—	—	—	—	F
207.	Khumukocham	—	F	F	—	—	F	—
208.	Khunjanmayum	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
209.	Khudeibam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
210.	Khulem	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
211.	Khuyumthem	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
212.	Khundongbam	—	—	—	—	—	F	—

Sl. No.	Family title or Sagei	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
213.	Khumjam	—	—	—	—	—	F	—
214.	Khuraijam	—	—	—	—	—	F	F
215.	Khuraicha Tenkhanpam	—	—	—	—	—	—	F
216.	Khuman Cheirakpam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
217.	Khunjam	F.	F	—	—	—	—	—
218.	Khutyonthem (Khuyonthem)	—	—	—	F	F	—	—
219.	Khunbongmayum	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
220.	Khuntongbam (Khudongbam)	—	—	—	—	—	—	F
221.	Khumujam	—	—	F	—	—	F	—
222.	Khumbam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
223.	Khumanthem	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
224.	Khuman Keirakpam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
225.	Khutheibam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
226.	Khoisnam	F	—	—	F	—	—	F
227.	Khoitongbam (Khoidongbam)	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
228.	Khoinjauam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
229.	Khoibam	—	F	—	F	—	—	—
230.	Khoknam	—	F	—	F	—	—	—
231.	Khoirisungbam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
232.	Khoirom	F	—	F	—	—	—	—
233.	Khoipam	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
234.	Khoitomtabam	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
235.	Khomdram	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
236.	Khoicham	—	—	—	—	—	—	F
237.	Khongbantabam	—	—	F	F	—	F	—
238.	Khoriyanbam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
239.	Khoknaam	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
240.	Khoiyangbam	—	—	—	F	F	—	—
241.	Khoinaijam	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
242.	Khompuba Thomdramam	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
243.	Khoirikhun Kaidem	—	—	—	—	—	F	—
244.	Khongnam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
245.	Khompudram	—	—	—	—	F	—	—

Sl. No.	Family title or Sagei	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
246.	Laikangbam	F	F	—	—	—	—	—
247.	Lantham	F	—	F	—	—	—	—
248.	Langdem	F	—	F	—	—	—	—
249.	Langpoklakpam (Langpok- lakpam-Chinggangbam)	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
250.	Lairenjam	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
251.	Laisom	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
252.	Lambam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
253.	Laikhuwam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
254.	Laishram (Laikhuram)	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
255.	Laishram (Ningthoukabam)	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
256.	Lakhom	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
257.	Langgam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
258.	Langheibam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
259.	Laitonjam	F	—	—	F	—	—	—
260.	Lairenlakpam	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
261.	Lampujam	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
262.	Laichujam	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
263.	Laiphrakpam	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
264.	Lairenmayum	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
265.	Langgonjam	—	—	—	—	—	F	F
266.	Laishangbam	F	—	—	F	—	—	—
267.	Lakpamsabam	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
268.	Langlenhanbam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
269.	Laikhram	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
270.	Lamabam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
271.	Laiphujam	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
272.	Lambajam (Lambujam)	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
273.	Langthangbam	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
274.	Laikhujam	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
275.	Laimujam	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
276.	Lamleirakam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
277.	Laipukhram	—	—	F	—	—	—	—

Sl. No.	Family title or Sagei	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
278.	Lankam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
279.	Langkham	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
280.	Laikhurum	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
281.	Limabam (Likmabam)	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
282.	Lisham	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
283.	Liushungbam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
284.	Lukram (Noinphabam)	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
285.	Luwanghangbam	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
286.	Lumkambam	—	—	—	—	—	—	F
287.	Ludonjam	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
288.	Loitongbam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
289.	Loitam	F	—	—	F	—	—	F
290.	Longjam	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
291.	Longmaithem	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
292.	Loktongbam	—	—	—	F	—	—	F
293.	Loijayangbam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
294.	Longkhumakham	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
295.	Loirenjam	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
296.	Lonjam (Wangkhem)	—	—	—	—	—	F	—
297.	Loukrakpam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
298.	Lourembam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
299.	Loupam	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
300.	Loushigam	—	—	—	—	—	—	F
301.	Louriyaam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
302.	Louriyam	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
303.	Loukham	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
304.	Loukhambam	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
305.	Lourungbam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
306.	Lemabam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
307.	Leisongbam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
308.	Leichoubam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
309.	Leimapokpam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
310.	Leimasangbam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—



Sl. No.	Family title or Sagei	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
311.	Leimran	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
312.	Leitanth	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
313.	Leimajam	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
314.	Leitam	—	—	—	—	—	—	F
315.	Leishangthem	—	—	—	—	F	—	F
316.	Leiyungsangbam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
317.	Leimayokpam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
318.	Leirongjam	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
319.	Leimakhujam	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
320.	Langmaithem	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
321.	Maisnam	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
322.	Mayanglambam	F	—	F	F	—	—	F
323.	Mayengbam	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
324.	Mayanglampham	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
325.	Maipham (Maibam)	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
326.	Maibam Hidaksungbam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
327.	Maiwakhongchamayum	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
328.	Maibram	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
329.	Maimom	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
330.	Mangdingbam	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
331.	Maibathiyam	—	—	—	—	—	—	F
332.	Maikuwam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
333.	Mairanbam (Mairenbam)	—	—	—	—	—	—	F
334.	Maiphuwam	—	—	F	—	F	—	—
335.	Mairenbam	F	—	—	—	F	—	—
336.	Mantangbam	—	—	—	—	—	F	—
337.	Maipham	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
338.	Mahoubam	—	—	—	—	—	F	—
339.	Mangkhom	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
340.	Mangshidam	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
341.	Moirangthem	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
342.	Moichem	F	—	F	—	—	—	—

Sl. No.	Family title or Sagei	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
343.	Moirangingthoumayum	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
344.	Mojam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
345.	Moirenja'n	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
346.	Mongjam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
347.	Mongphijam (Mongbijam)	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
348.	Moirangleishangthem	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
349.	Mangsatabam	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
350.	Moirang Keithellakpam	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
351.	Moirang Narengbam	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
352.	Moirang Nongthombam	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
353.	Moirang Yumkhaibam	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
354.	Moirangmayum	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
355.	Moibunglokpam	F	F	—	—	—	—	—
356.	Mongbijam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
357.	Mouphangmayum	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
358.	Moirang Chongtham	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
359.	Moirangthem Ngangkhrubam	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
360.	Moirangthem Nunglepam	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
361.	Moirangthem Ngangom	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
362.	Moirang Keithellakpam Sanarungbam	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
363.	Moirangthem Okram	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
364.	Moirang Wangkhem	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
365.	Moirang Khwairakpam	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
367.	Moirang Lairenmayum	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
368.	Moukhuwam	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
369.	Moikhongbam	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
370.	Morimayum	—	—	—	—	—	F	—
371.	Mepram	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
372.	Melem	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
373.	Meitram	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
374.	Meinam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
375.	Meipubam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—

Sl. No.	Family title or Sagei	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
376.	Meiphuwam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
377.	Meitankeishangbam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
378.	Mutum	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
379.	Mukhom	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
380.	Mutkhom	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
381.	Mungyangjam (Mungyangbam)	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
382.	Mungkham	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
383.	Naorem	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
384.	Naoroibam	F	F	—	—	—	—	—
385.	Nameirakpam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
386.	Nakambam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
387.	Nakonsangbam (Naokansangbam)	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
388.	Naimoijam	F	—	—	—	F	—	—
389.	Namoijam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
390.	Namoirakpam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
391.	Nahakpam	F	F	—	—	—	—	—
392.	Naotham	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
393.	Nambam	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
394.	Namram	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
395.	Nakpokhanjabam	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
396.	Narungbam	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
397.	Naosekpam	—	—	—	F	—	—	F
398.	Naodam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
399.	Nandeibam	F	—	—	F	F	F	—
400.	Nakpakhanbam (Angomtaba)	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
401.	Naosram	—	—	—	—	—	—	F
402.	Nayanglambam Mutam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
403.	Nameirakpam Khwairakpam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
404.	Narumbam	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
405.	Nanbam	—	F	F	—	—	—	—
406.	Naoroijam	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
407.	Naokansangbam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—

Sl. No.	Family title or Sagei	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
408.	Naobanbam	F	-	-	-	-	-	-
409.	Namujam	-	-	-	-	F	-	-
410.	Ningthoujam	F	-	-	-	-	-	-
411.	Ningombam	-	-	-	F	-	-	-
412.	Ningthoukhongjam	-	-	-	-	F	-	-
413.	Ningthonbam	-	-	-	F	-	-	-
414.	Ningthoukapam	-	-	F	-	-	-	-
415.	Ningngaoihikpam	-	F	-	-	-	-	-
416.	Ninghitpam	-	F	-	-	-	-	-
417.	Nongthombam	F	F	-	F	-	-	-
418.	Nongmeikappam	F	-	-	-	-	-	-
419.	Nongmaithem	-	-	-	F	-	-	-
420.	Nongjengbam	-	-	-	-	-	F	-
421.	Nongthonjam	F	-	-	-	-	-	-
422.	Nongpokpam	-	F	-	-	-	-	-
423.	Nungleppam	-	-	-	-	F	-	-
424.	Numitleimasangbam	F	-	-	-	-	-	-
425.	Nepram (Mepram)	-	-	F	-	-	-	-
426.	Narengbam	-	-	-	-	F	-	-
427.	Ngariyanbam	F	-	-	-	-	-	-
428.	Ngangom	F	F	-	-	F	-	-
429.	Ngangom Yumdangbam	F	-	-	-	-	-	-
430.	Ngathem	F	-	-	F	-	-	F
431.	Ngangbam	-	F	F	-	-	-	-
432.	Ngasepam	-	-	F	F	F	-	-
433.	Nganukappam	-	-	-	F	-	-	F
434.	Ngayenbam	-	-	-	F	-	-	-
435.	Ngarengbam (Ngalengbam)	-	-	-	F	-	-	-
436.	Ngangkham	-	-	-	-	F	-	-
437.	Ngakhem	-	-	-	-	-	-	F
438.	Ngakhrungbam	F	-	-	-	-	-	-
439.	Nganglengbam	-	-	-	F	-	-	-
440.	Nganglom	-	F	-	-	-	-	-

Sl. No.	Family title or Sagei	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
441.	Ngangnembam	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
442.	Ngoubam	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
443.	Oinam	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
444.	Oinam Yendusangbam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
445.	Oinam Okram	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
446.	Oinam Okram Mairembam	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
447.	Oinam Ongtham	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
448.	Oinam Ongthaam	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
449.	Paonam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
450.	Paopam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
451.	Panujam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
452.	Pangabam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
453.	Pangkheijam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
454.	Pangkhoijam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
455.	Palpulam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
456.	Paugaijam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
457.	Pangkhaijam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
458.	Pallujam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
459.	Pallembam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
460.	Pebam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
461.	Potsangbam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
462.	Polembam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
463.	Posubam	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
464.	Polem	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
465.	Pongsubam	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
466.	Pounam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
467.	Pungkraijam	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
468.	Puklapam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
469.	Pukhrem	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
470.	Pukhranbam	—	—	F	—	F	—	—
471.	Puyam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
472.	Pukketjam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—

Sl. No.	Family title or Sagei	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
473.	Putonjam	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
474.	Pukhulpam	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
475.	Pukhranbam	—	—	F	—	F	—	—
476.	Puthem	F	—	—	—	F	—	—
477.	Phairenbam	F	—	F	—	—	—	—
478.	Phairenjam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
479.	Phairelpam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
480.	Phanoham	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
481.	Phanjem	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
482.	Phanjoubam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
483.	Phandom	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
484.	Phampibam	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
485.	Phampihanbam	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
486.	Phourungbam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
487.	Phelem	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
488.	Phijam	F	—	—	—	—	F	—
489.	Phicham	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
490.	Phijaphibam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
491.	Phidam	—	—	—	—	—	F	—
492.	Phijam Tekoham	—	—	—	—	—	F	—
493.	Pheiroijam	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
494.	Pheidsaibam	—	—	—	—	—	—	F
495.	Phuritsabam	F	—	—	F	—	—	—
496.	Saithom	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
497.	Seirem	F	—	—	F	—	—	—
498.	Satokpam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
499.	Sanoujam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
500.	Sarungbam	F	—	—	—	F	—	—
501.	Salam	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
502.	Sakatpam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
503.	Santham	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
504.	Samom (Sanmom)	—	—	F	—	—	—	F
505.	Sansenbam	—	—	F	—	—	F	—

Sl. No.	Family title or Sagei	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
506.	Sangkhom	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
507.	Sangombam (Sangabam)	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
508.	Sairom (Sarom)	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
509.	Sapam	F	—	F	—	—	—	—
510.	Sangam	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
511.	Sarom Keikapam (Keikrambam)	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
512.	Sankhom	—	—	F	—	F	—	—
513.	Sanjibam	—	—	—	—	—	F	—
514.	Samnoibam	—	—	—	—	—	—	F
515.	Sarangthem (Naoroibam)	—	—	—	F	—	—	F
516.	Sarokhaibam (Saratkhaibam)	—	—	—	F	—	—	F
517.	Sansinbam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
518.	Sanawaibam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
519.	Salam (Harongbam)	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
520.	Saggappam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
521.	Sambanduram	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
522.	Sangdoujam	—	—	—	F	F	—	—
523.	Sanjiram	—	—	—	—	—	F	—
524.	Samjetsabam	—	—	—	—	—	F	—
525.	Samukcham	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
526.	Sakappam	—	—	F	F	—	—	—
527.	Sanasabam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
528.	Sambandram	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
429.	Sagolsem	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
530.	Sagolsanjabam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
531.	Sangaijam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
532.	Sanabam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
533.	Sanasam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
534.	Shingkhambam	F	F	—	—	F	—	—
535.	Sougrakpam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
536.	Soubam (Soubram)	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
537.	Soukaijam (Songaijam)	—	—	F	—	—	—	—

Sl. No.	Family title or Sagei	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
538.	Sensam (Senjam- Leibaktabam)	F	F	—	F	—	—	—
539.	Sensam	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
540.	Seram	F	—	—	F	—	—	—
541.	Sendangmayum	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
542.	Sembangjam	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
543.	Sentam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
544.	Sinam (Aton Sinam)	F	—	F	—	—	—	—
545.	Singkham	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
546.	Singgam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
547.	Singkharam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
548.	Siyatpam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
549.	Sikhubam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
550.	Soyam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
551.	Soram	F	F	F	F	—	—	—
552.	Sorelsangbam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
553.	Sobam	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
554.	Soyam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
555.	Soraisam	—	—	—	F	—	F	F
556.	Soibam (Soibam- Pukhrambam)	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
557.	Sombam	—	—	—	—	—	—	F
558.	Sukham	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
559.	Suraisam	—	—	—	—	—	—	F
560.	Sanglem	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
561.	Sangdoijam	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
562.	Sanggaissenbam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
563.	Sangkhubam	—	—	—	—	—	—	F
564.	Sanglenmayum	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
565.	Sangngambam	—	—	—	—	—	—	F
566.	Taibungjam	—	F	F	—	—	—	—
567.	Taimacham	F	—	—	—	—	—	—



Sl. No.	Family title or Sagei	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
568.	Taiyujam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
569.	Taopam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
570.	Taomom	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
571.	Taorem	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
572.	Taijam Naorem	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
573.	Taibungjam Wareppem	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
574.	Touramba m	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
575.	Takhellambam	F	F	—	—	—	—	—
576.	Tokpa m	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
577.	Toijam	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
578.	Toibijam	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
579.	Tonnapam Nongthombam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
580.	Tonjam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
581.	Tongkhrom	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
582.	Tongbram	—	—	—	F	—	—	F
583.	Tonanbam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
584.	Tonbam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
585.	Tonthram	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
586.	Tingbijam (Tinbijam)	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
587.	Tilem	—	—	—	F	F	—	—
588.	Telem	—	—	—	F	F	—	—
589.	Tekcham	—	—	—	—	—	F	—
590.	Tekcham Khundongbam	—	—	—	—	—	F	—
591.	Toupokcham	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
592.	Toumem	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
593.	Toumem Lourebam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
594.	Tourangbam	—	—	—	F	—	—	F
595.	Tourem	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
596.	Toumom	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
597.	Tensubam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
598.	Tentha-inbam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
599.	Thanggansabam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
600.	Thamangocham	—	F	—	—	—	—	—

Sl. No.	Family title or Sagei	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
601.	Thaamar gcham	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
602.	Thaoteijam	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
603.	Thangjam	—	F	F	F	F	—	F
694.	Thangjam Soyam	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
605.	Thangjam Khumukcham	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
606.	Thanjam Yangsom	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
607.	Thangjam Yusam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
608.	Thangjam Sangkhom	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
609.	Thangjam Yumpubam (Yupubam)	—	—	—	—	—	—	F
610.	Thangjam Samukcham	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
611.	Thangjam Yaosom	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
612.	Thaodem	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
613.	Thamangbam	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
614.	Thanggangsaba Hanglem	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
615.	Tharorjam	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
616.	Thanggajam	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
617.	Thiyam	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
618.	Thingbaijam	—	—	F	—	—	F	—
619.	Thenggujam (Thuggujam)	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
620.	Thingnam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
621.	Thingbam	—	—	—	—	—	F	—
622.	Thinggom	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
623.	Thinbam	—	—	—	—	—	F	—
624.	Thingyam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
625.	Thongngam	—	—	—	—	—	F	—
626.	Thongratabam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
627.	Thongkapam	F	—	—	—	—	—	F
628.	Thokchom	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
629.	Thongngajam	—	—	—	—	F	—	—
630.	Thonggabaam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
631.	Thoidingjam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
632.	Thongram	F	—	F	—	—	—	—

Sl. No.	Family title or Sagei	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
633.	Thongbam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
634.	Thongganaam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
635.	Thongcham	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
636.	Thoudam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
637.	Thounaojam	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
638.	Thoudem	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
639.	Thumganbam	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
640.	Urikkhinbam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
641.	Uripam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
642.	Urikinbam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
643.	Urepkinbam	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
644.	Usham	F	F	—	F	F	—	—
645.	Waikhom	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
646.	Warepam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
647.	Wairakpam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
648.	Wairom	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
649.	Wangkheimayum	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
650.	Wangkhei Phamdongbam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
651.	Waagkhei Phamlambam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
652.	Wangkheirakpam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
653.	Wahengbam	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
654.	Wakouthem	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
655.	Wakhongthem	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
656.	Wanglepam	—	F	—	F	—	—	—
657.	Wayellambam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
658.	Wakom	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
659.	Wangkhem	—	—	—	F	F	F	—
660.	Wangnembam	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
661.	Wakambam	—	—	—	—	F	—	F
662.	Wakalpam	—	—	—	—	F	—	F
663.	Warembam (Warepam)	F	—	F	—	F	—	—

Sl. No.	Family title or Sagei	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
664.	Wangpijam	-	-	-	-	F	F	-
665.	Wangkonjam	-	-	-	-	-	F	-
666.	Wangkonsangbam	-	-	-	-	-	F	-
667.	Wairokpam	-	-	-	F	-	-	F
668.	Wangkhei-lourungbam	F	-	-	-	-	-	-
669.	Wanglenbam	-	F	-	F	F	-	-
670.	Wayelbam	-	-	F	-	F	-	-
671.	Wanggom (Wanggam)	-	-	F	-	-	-	-
672.	Wangbijam	-	-	-	-	F	F	-
673.	Wangkharakpam	F	-	-	-	-	-	-
674.	Waheibam	-	-	-	F	-	-	-
675.	Yangouyengbam	F	-	F	-	-	-	-
676.	Yanggabam	F	F	-	-	-	-	F
677.	Yangoubam	F	-	-	-	-	-	-
678.	Yaiskullakpam	F	-	-	-	-	-	-
679.	Yangkambam	-	F	-	-	-	-	-
680.	Yangambam	-	F	-	-	-	-	-
681.	Yangkokpam	-	F	-	-	-	-	-
682.	Yanguyeibam (Yurenjam)	-	-	F	-	-	-	-
683.	Yambem	-	-	F	-	-	-	-
684.	Yangleibam	-	-	F	-	-	-	-
685.	Yaithingbam	-	-	F	-	-	-	-
686.	Yaithibam	-	-	F	-	-	-	-
687.	Yaithom	-	-	-	-	F	-	-
688.	Yangoijam	-	-	-	-	F	-	-
689.	Yangouyeibam	F	-	-	-	-	-	-
690.	Yanglem	-	-	F	-	-	-	-
691.	Yangnuyeibam	F	-	-	-	-	-	-
692.	Yangoiyam	-	-	-	F	-	F	-
693.	Yengkhom	F	-	-	-	-	-	-
694.	Yenkokpam	F	-	-	-	-	-	-
695.	Yenkokpam Khanglakpam	F	-	-	-	-	-	-

**FAMILY TITLE OR SAGRI WITH YEK-SALAI**      605

Sl. No.	Family title or Sagei	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
696.	Yensemam	F	—	F	—	—	—	—
697.	Yendrembam	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
698.	Yelangbam (Elangbam)	—	F	—	F	—	F	F
699.	Yenthapam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
700.	Yelwam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
701.	Yentakpam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
702.	Yelam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
703.	Yoirelbam	—	F	—	—	—	—	—
704.	Yumnam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
705.	Yumnam (Sorensangbam)	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
706.	Yumlembam	—	F	—	F	—	—	—
707.	Yumkham	—	—	F	—	—	—	—
708.	Yumnam Konsam	F	—	—	—	—	—	—
709.	Yumgubam	—	—	—	—	—	—	F
710.	Yupanbam	—	—	—	F	—	—	—
711.	Yumkhaibam	F	—	—	F	F	—	—
712.	Yukadam	—	—	F	—	—	—	—

**FAMILY TITLES OF MANIPURI BRAHMINS WITH GOTRAS  
OR  
YUMNAK SAGEI OF MEITEI BAMON WITH GOTRAS**

S.No.	Family title or Yumnak Sagei	Shandilya Gotra	Kasyapa Gotra	Yongdalya Gotra	Mandalya Gotra	Goutama Gotra	Kouska Gotra	Atreya Gotra	Bhadradiwaje Gotra	Neemis Gotra	Aangrass Gotra	Bashaha Gotras
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	
1.	Acharyamayum	DNA										
2.	Adhikarimayum	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	F	-	-
3.	Anoubam	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4.	Anoubam Uripoktabam	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5.	Anoubam Thangmeiband Pankhatabam	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
6.	Aribam	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	F
7.	Aribam Bishnulatpam	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	F
8.	Aribam Sagolailatpam	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	F
9.	Aribam Tampaklailatpam	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	F
10.	Arambam	-	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
11.	Bachhaspatimayum	-	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
12.	Brahmacharimayum	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
13.	Brajabasimayum	DNA										
14.	Bishnulatpam	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	F
15.	Choudhurimayum	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	F
16.	Dhyandasmayum	DNA										
17.	Gojatribamayum	DNA										

F—Falls in

DNA—Data not available.



**FAMILY TITLE OF MANIPURI MUSLIM  
OR  
YUMNAK SAGEI OF MEITEI PANGAL**

The Muslim community of the Meiteis were also allotted family title or Yumnak Sagei according to their occupation. Now a days the Muslim community of the Meiteis hardly use their family titles like earlier periods. It appears they prefer the Persian style of name. It may be mentioned here that some later Muslim immigrants were given nine other family titles in addition to the earlier thirty-one already allotted during the period of Khagemba. The nine family titles given were 2 during the period Paikhomba, 2 during the period of Charairongba, 1 during the period of Marjit, 2 during the period Gambhir Singh and 2 during the period of Chadrakirti Singh respectively. The family titles allotted during the period of Khagemba are given as the following.

- |                        |                     |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Ipham-mayum         | 17. Phundreamayum   |
| 2. Khullakpam          | 18. Bagimayum       |
| 3. Khutheibam          | 19. Thongkhongmayum |
| 4. Sanggomsumbam       | 20. Wangmayum       |
| 5. Imkhaibam           | 21. Nongsayaibam    |
| 6. Korimayum           | 22. Shinggakhongbam |
| 7. Hawai-inkholmayum   | 23. Mansam          |
| 8. Sairem              | 24. Keinoumayum     |
| 9. Mojingmayum         | 25. Baseimayum      |
| 10. Leishangkhongmayum | 26. Phusam          |
| 11. Sajoubam           | 27. Pukhrimayum     |
| 12. Urupmayum          | 28. Makakmayum      |
| 13. Maibam             | 29. Miraimayum      |
| 14. Thoubalmayum       | 30. Yangkhumbam     |
| 15. Moinam             | 31. Nongjaimuyum    |
| 16. Chesam             |                     |



## CLANS OF SOME OF THE TRIBES LIVING IN HILLS

All the tribes who migrated upto about the 15th century A.D. and took part in the formation of Meitei and its language but continued to live on the hills maintaining their separate identity, were allotted or developed seven clans for each of them in the pattern of the valley. There is no record when and who introduced the seven clan pattern, but it is very likely that it was introduced during the reign of Pamheiba. The seven clan systems of some of the tribes are given below.

### *Tangkhul :*

(1) Duidang, (2) Sadang, (3) Khodang, (4) Khapudang, (5) Choudang, (6) Sithudang, and (7) Kingdang.

### *Chothe-Kom :*

(1) Yurung, (2) Thao, (3) Marim, (4) Parpa, (5) Rang sai, (6) Makal, and (7) Rakkung.

### *Maring :*

(1) Dalla, (2) Raj, (3) Dingthoi, (4) Chongdur, (5) Thoitak, (6) Sampur, and (7) Thangnga.

### *Koireng :*

(1) Yeite, (2) Sonthu, (3) Leison, (4) Tumtin, (5) Tente, (6) Walbe, and (7) Mikle.

### *Kabui :*

(1) Kammei, (2) Gangmei, (3) Golmei, (4) Longmei, (5) Maringmei, (6) Palmei, and (7) Phaomei.

### *Moyon-Monsang :*

(1) Ruin Wangran, (2) Chinir Nungohin, (3) Sesong Hungam, (4) Songshir Khartur, (5) Nguru Langrom, (6) Sirbum Turip, and (7) Bungehir Charu.

*Anal :*

(1) Murchal, (2) Masum, (3) Pasen, (4) Chantung, (5) Runlal,  
(6) Yasha, and (7) Hrangpang.

*Kharam :*

(1) Sheiphu, (2) Sheichel, (3) Rangla, (4) Rakhou, (5) Seilou,  
(6) Mareeyam, and (7) Kailam.

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